

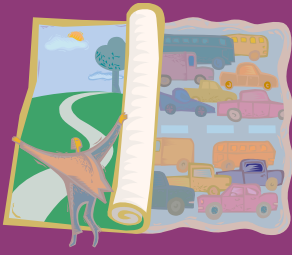
Guiding Maryland's Forest Community into the 21st Century

Maryland Forestry Task Force

Final Report to
The Honorable
Parris N. Glendening, Governor

December 2000

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OVERVIEW

On February 24, 1998 Governor Parris N. Glendening signed an Executive Order which created the Maryland Forestry Task Force. The Governor made clear his reasoning for creating the Task Force with a broad and challenging 2-year mission:

WHEREAS Promoting a healthy forest and abundant forest system is one of the most important legacies Marylanders can bestow upon future generations.

WHEREAS Forests in Maryland have not only been conserved and protected by various public programs for which the State has received national acclaim, including Program Open Space, the Agricultural Land Preservation Program, and the Smart Growth and Rural Legacy Programs, but have also proliferated by virtue of the faithful stewardship and management exercised by forest landowners and the forest products industry through cooperative partnerships.

WHEREAS The forest products industry is an important contributor to the State's overall economy and employment, and will play a key role in promoting the health, conservation and proper management of Maryland's privately-owned forested lands.

WHEREAS Advancing the preservation and management of Maryland's forests for future generations requires a comprehensive assessment of the issues impacting Maryland's forest landowners and the forest products industry.

Cognizant of the mission he imposed upon the Maryland Forestry Task Force and impressed with the work of the Task Force to date, Governor Glendening extended the life of the Maryland Forestry Task Force on October 20, 1999 until December 2000 (attached).

Maryland's forest community is facing serious challenges during the 21st Century, most notably increased sprawl development patterns attendant to an expanding population. It is imperative that Maryland conserve and manage its renewable forest resources for future generations. This will require bold and progressive action, not unlike the actions recommended by the Task Force with this Report.

In short, the Maryland Forestry Task Force has advanced many innovative policy actions which will require statutory and budgetary approval by the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly. The Task Force strongly encourages timely consideration of its recommendations by Maryland's policy makers....in areas where administrative action is required, DNR should take the lead. Especially noteworthy is the performance-driven and results-oriented nature of this Report, a "first" in the State of Maryland from the perspective of a Gubernatorial task force. In June 1997 Governor Glendening issued a directive to all Executive Branch agencies -- embodied in a document entitled, **Managing for Results..** *a means of tracking achievements via quantifiable indices linked to specific goals and objectives*. The Maryland Forestry Task Force strongly believes that its results-oriented strategies are consistent with the Governor's vision for Maryland's future and that its innovative policy proposals will advance the interests of Maryland's forest community into the 21st Century.

STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Forests are the solution...they keep our water clean, air pure, wildlife abundant and fiber needs satisfied.

Few challenges facing us in the 21st Century are greater in importance than sustaining Maryland's forest resources in view of an expanding population and changing land use patterns. Governor Parris N. Glendening is mindful of the problems associated with forest fragmentation and parcelization and has exerted strong leadership to conserve these renewable resources for future generations. Governor Glendening's vision for Maryland's forest legacy is consistent with his nationally acclaimed Smart Growth Initiative, and is clearly reflected in the Executive Order he signed on February 24, 1998 which created the Maryland Forestry Task Force.

Inspired by the Governor's call for action, the Maryland Forestry Task Force dedicated itself to defining excellence with the development of this Report. *Notable is the fact that 40% of Maryland's 6.9 million acres are forested and that 90% of the forested lands is privately owned by approximately 130,000 landowners -- keys to ensuring the sustainability of Maryland's forest resources into the 21st Century are the conservation of lands in private hands and ensuring the economic viability of the forest products industry which relies on these lands and landowners to provide employment and the multitude of fiber products needed by all.* The recommendations presented within this Report -- predicated upon testimony received by numerous stakeholder groups and expert witnesses during the three years -- focus on two themes:

RECOMMENDATIONS DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE RETENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATELY-OWNED FOREST LANDS

RECOMMENDATIONS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF MARYLAND'S FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

With respect to the first theme, the Report recommends that (1) Maryland's Forest Service, Forestry Boards and the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service be given the financial resources necessary to advise private forest landowners on ways to better manage their forest lands; (2) Maryland's principal land conservation programs be better coordinated to collectively conserve forested areas of the State; (3) an inventory data base of Maryland's forest resources be developed every 5 years; (4) tax incentives be provided to those private forest landowners willing to implement forest conservation management plans; and (5) Maryland's primary and secondary education curricula ensure a concerted focus on the values, benefits and management of forests to Maryland's environment and economy.

With respect to the second theme, the Report recommends that (1) State financial assistance be rendered in helping Maryland's forest products industry upgrade and modernize its manufacturing equipment in order to enhance operational efficiency and promote job retention/growth within Maryland's rural communities; (2) Maryland's Forest Products Utilization and Marketing Program -- a program designed to help market Maryland's forest products -- be created; and (3) a user guide be developed that facilitates an awareness of land use regulations which impact the management of privately-owned forest lands and the operations of Maryland's forest products industry.

In addition, the Task Force framed a set of recommendations designed to link the concept of urban forestry to Maryland's Smart Growth goals. Urban trees offer a wide range of benefits to citizens who live in more densely

populated areas. In fact some believe that tree density may be a better indicator of the health and livability of our communities than population or dwelling units. The Task Force believes that trees are part of the very fabric of a community that attracts citizens to our urban areas.

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ATTACHMENTS

1	Governor Glendening's Letter extending the life of the Task Force
2	A Brief Bio on each Member of the Task Force
3	September 3, 1999 Letter from Secretary Sarah J. Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D.
4	September 22, 1999 Letter from the District 33 Legislative Delegation
5	Change in the Distribution of Land Class by Inventory Year'
6	Percent Forest Land By County -- 1986 and 1999

State of Maryland

Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.1998.09

Maryland Forestry Task Force

- WHEREAS The State of Maryland contains 6.29 million acres of which 42 percent (2.7 million acres) are forested; ninety percent of these forested lands are privately owned by approximately 120,000 landowners;
- WHEREAS Promoting a healthy and abundant forest system is one of the most important legacies Marylanders can bestow upon future generations;
- WHEREAS Forests in Maryland have not only been conserved and protected by various public programs for which the State has received national acclaim, including Program Open Space, the Agricultural Land Preservation Program, and the Smart Growth and Rural Legacy Programs, but have also proliferated by virtue of the faithful stewardship and management exercised by forest landowners and the forest products industry through cooperative partnerships;
- WHEREAS The forest products industry is an important contributor to the State's overall economy and employment, and will play a key role in promoting the health, conservation and proper management of Maryland's privately-owned forested lands; and
- WHEREAS Advancing the preservation and management of Maryland's forests for future generations requires a comprehensive assessment of the issues impacting Maryland's forest landowners and the forest products industry today.
- NOW, THEREFORE,** I, PARRIS N. GLENDENING, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:
- A. Established. There is a Maryland Forestry Task Force.
 - B. Membership and Procedures.
 - (1) The Task Force shall consist of 11 members who shall be appointed by the Governor and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

(2) The Governor shall appoint the chairperson from among the members of the Task Force.

(3) The members of the Task Force may not receive compensation for their services. Members may be reimbursed for their reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with standard travel regulations as provided in law.

(4) The Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources shall provide staff support and technical assistance to the Task Force.

C. Duties of the Task Force. The Maryland Forestry Task Force shall:

(1) Undertake a comprehensive survey of the State’s forest resources;

(2) Examine and recommend ways to advance the conservation, protection and replenishment of privately-owned forested lands in the State;

(3) Study the environmental impact of healthy and abundant forested lands on the State’s ecosystem, including water quality and the protection of the watershed from harmful microorganisms;

(4) Recommend methods to encourage the use of accepted forestry management practices on privately-owned forested lands;

(5) Assess the financial impact associated with the annual contributions made to the State’s economy by the forest product industry;

(6) Examine and make recommendations regarding existing statutory and regulatory restrictions imposed upon private owners of forested lands and the forest products industry;

(7) Examine the use of economic incentives to help forest landowners and businesses maintain their land for productive forest usage and impede the conversion of such land for residential, commercial or industrial development;

(8) Recommend ways to strengthen Maryland’s existing “right to practice forestry” policy; and

(9) Enhance public awareness about the environmental and economic contributions made by forest landowners and the forest products industry through their stewardship and management of Maryland's forests.

D. Reports to the Governor

(1) The Task Force shall forward an interim progress report by December 1, 1998.

(2) The Task Force shall forward its final report by December 1, 1999.

NOTE: The Executive Order was signed by the Governor on February 24, 1998 and extended by the Governor until December 2000 via a letter to the Task Force Chairman (the Honorable Gary G. Allen) dated October 20, 1999.

MEMBERSHIP*

The Honorable Gary G. Allen -- CHAIR

Ms. Frances C. Cullen

Mr. Jeff A. Messenger

Mr. William R. Miles

Ernest L. Murphy, Ph.D.

Jodi R. O'Day, Esquire

Ms. Sylvia D. Whitworth

*A brief bio on each Member of the Task Force is contained in the appendix.

Maryland Forestry Task Force FINAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A summary of the Task Force’s final recommendations are outlined below with their respective rationale outlined in Part II.

A summary of the Task Force’s recommendations are outlined below, including the projected fiscal impact attendant to each recommendation and the perceived means of realizing each recommendation in terms of administrative, statutory, budgetary and/or regulatory action. *The only exception is RECOMMENDATION 1 in the OVERVIEW section because it “sets the stage” for recommendations noted in subsequent chapters.* Projected costs are ongoing with a two-fold exception: (1) some costs are one-time only which will be noted; and (2) costs associated with the Renewable Natural Resource Investment Priority [Recommendation 16] are for a five year period, fiscal years 2002 through 2006.

Total Projected Costs Attendant to Programmatic Initiatives for Forest Landowners

\$3.1 million for Fiscal Year 2002

Total Project Costs Attendant to Promoting the Economic Viability of Maryland’s Forest Products Industry

\$5.0 million for Fiscal Year 2002

CHAPTER 9 OF THE REPORT REFLECTS PROJECTED COSTS DURING THE FISCAL YEAR 2002 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2006 PERIOD.

It is important to note the Task Force encourages the Governor and the General Assembly to appropriate general fund monies -- not funds derived from sources currently available to Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources -- to satisfy the recommendations noted herein.

Overview

RECOMMENDATION 1: Enhance landowner outreach efforts by various stakeholders and pursue other strategies intended to realize forest stewardship plans on 75% of privately owned forest acreage, (approx. 1.7 million acres) -- lands deemed manageable and/or economically viable by the landowner -- within the next 10 years. Other recommendations included in the Report will identify financial incentives, landowner outreach efforts and other strategies to help achieve the 75% goal.

Chapter 1

Maryland's Threatened Forests

RECOMMENDATION 2: Adequately fund, implement and strengthen the analysis of an inventory data base concerning Maryland's forest resources that is updated annually and completed statewide every five years. A strengthened partnership with the U.S. Forest Service can be realized because Maryland needs the basic forestry data reflected in the Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) developed by the U.S. Forest Service on a more frequent basis.

\$60,000
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 3: Create a Targeted Priority Resource Initiative by an Interagency Workgroup -- comprised of the Departments of Agriculture, Environment, Natural Resources, Planning, University of Maryland [Maryland Cooperative Extension Service], Maryland Association of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League -- to be reviewed and approved by the Governor and the General Assembly's Joint Subcommittee Committee on Program Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation. Envisioned is an Initiative that would establish priorities governing annual distribution of monies allocated to Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and the Rural Legacy Program in a two-fold way: (1) concentrate significant funds in 10 counties where population growth and the attendant development threat are greatest in order to achieve appropriate Green Infrastructure linkages of contiguous forests; and (2) utilize the funds for the promotion and conservation of riparian buffers, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, environmental and passive recreation within those counties bordering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

NOTE: State lawmakers appropriate millions of dollars annually to Maryland's 3 principal land preservation programs -- Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and Rural Legacy Program. All three programs speak to different missions, but, they do share a commonality of protecting open space land -- Maryland's coveted Green Infrastructure -- from the development pressure exerted by an ever-expanding population. Noteworthy also is the fact the *Stream ReLeaf Plan* -- Maryland's plan for achieving Governor Glendening's commitment to the Chesapeake Bay Program that Maryland will create 600 miles of riparian forested buffers by the year 2010 -- speaks to the importance of targeting these programs to "protect high-priority resources."

\$0
Administrative

Chapter 2

Public/Private Role in Sustainability

RECOMMENDATION 4: Develop, upgrade and/or modify forest stewardship plans on all DNR-managed public lands that speak to fish and wildlife habitat improvement, natural heritage, recreation and aesthetics, soil and water conservation and wood products consistent with the 75% goal recommended for privately owned forest lands within the 10-year time period.

\$330,000 for new DNR foresters + \$130,000 for equipment¹
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 5: Encourage future forest land acquisitions that come into the public domain to also be accompanied with the development of forest stewardship plans when deemed appropriate. Such plans will help ensure that sound forestry management practices will contribute to the maintenance, health and vitality of our forests. Ideally, the development of the accompanying forest stewardship plan would be jointly funded between the grantor and the grantee.

\$0 = Absorb within existing budgeted resources
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 6: Encourage the Department of Budget and Management to meet and confer with the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service for the purpose of:

- Realizing a clearer understanding of the Extension's mission and accomplishments concerning its educational outreach efforts to Maryland's forest land owners, homeowners, etc.
- Enhancing the coordination between the Extension and other State entities responsible for effecting similar landowner outreach efforts.
- Developing alternative ways and means to strengthen the Extension's ability to more completely meet the needs for educational programs to forest land owners, homeowners, etc., consistent with its statutory mission. Areas worthy of additional educational efforts relating to natural resources and the environment include: Forest Management, Wildlife Management and Natural Resources Information Systems

Indeterminate = Costs driven by resulting decisions
Administrative and Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 7: Provide, with annual state general fund monies, (1) each Maryland

¹The \$330,000 for new DNR foresters cost projection noted in Recommendations 4 and 7, respectively, should only be counted once; meaning a total cost for both recommendations pertinent to new DNR foresters @ \$330,000, not \$660,000, and this reflects ongoing costs. An additional \$130,000 is needed for a one-time only expense related to equipment purchase.

Forest Conservancy District Board with a minimum \$2,000 annual State grant [conditioned on an equal \$1 for \$1 match from the respective boards]; (2) the Coverts Cooperator Program and other related forest landowner outreach programs [University of Maryland -- Maryland Cooperative Extension Service] with a minimum \$50,000 annual non-matching State grant; and (3) DNR with \$330,000 beginning in fiscal year 2002 for new foresters [in conjunction with DNR's responsibility attendant to Recommendation 4] and a minimum \$125,000 annual State appropriation to provide contract funds to professional forest consultants within the private sector. These monies would be utilized exclusively to help facilitate landowner outreach efforts designed to achieve a twin purpose -- (1) adoption of forest stewardship plans on 75% of Maryland's privately owned forests [e.g. lands manageable and economically viable]; and/or (2) provision of professional forestry assistance to forest landowners even if they choose not to develop forest stewardship plans.

\$50,000 for Forestry Boards + \$50,000 for Coverts Cooperator/landowner outreach programs [University of Maryland, Maryland Cooperative Extension Service] + \$330,00 for new DNR foresters + \$125,000 in contract funds to professional forest consultants within the private sector
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 8: Establish a responsive State policy for dealing with gypsy moth infestation on a timely and effective basis between the Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Task Force strongly encourages the Governor to work with the Board of Public Works in securing requisite, emergency funds to help mitigate the problem of forest defoliation and tree loss associated with the Spring 2001 hatch of gypsy moths and thereafter.

\$500,000
Budgetary

Chapter 3

Incentives for Stewardship

RECOMMENDATION 9: Provide financial incentives to private landowners for purposes of encouraging them to retain and manage their forested lands in order to help prevent the permanent conversion of their lands to non-forested use.

\$500,000
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 10: Support legislation in the Maryland General Assembly that provides a one-time only State income tax credit equal to 100% of the costs associated with the development of a forest stewardship plan for interested forest landowners. For forest landowners who own land within the Critical Area, as defined by State law, the State income tax credit would be equal to "double" the amount of the actual cost of the stewardship plan. To illustrate, if a stewardship

plan was developed outside the Critical Area at \$350 plus \$8 per acre, the State income tax credit would be equal to a like amount. The credit would double if the forest stewardship plan was developed within the Critical Area.

**Estimated \$750,000 in foregone annual State income tax revenues
Statutory and Budgetary**

RECOMMENDATION 11: Support legislation in the Maryland General Assembly that provides a sales tax exemption for all equipment and pollution control devices directly used in the primary and secondary wood manufacturing process but, only in those jurisdictions designated as *One Maryland counties*. In 1999, the General Assembly enacted the One Maryland Economic Development Program for Distressed Counties which designated certain counties as economically distressed and worthy of State financial assistance. One Maryland jurisdictions -- Allegany, Garrett, Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, Worcester and Baltimore City -- are the remaining strongholds for Maryland's forest products industry, save Baltimore City. The intent is to help retain and attract new jobs in impoverished areas of Maryland through the encouragement of sawmill modernization and creation of new furniture making and other value added companies.

**Indeterminate annual State revenue loss
Statutory and Budgetary**

RECOMMENDATION 12: Support statewide, enabling legislation -- patterned after Senate Bill 563 of 1998 for Dorchester County only -- that authorizes all Maryland counties to grant a property tax credit up to 100% on: (1) agricultural land that is subject to a nutrient management plan or that is developing a nutrient management plan for implementation; or (2) forest land that is subject to a forest management plan or similar agreement. Every landowner that steps forward and adopts one of these plans helps define and bestow their own legacy to the future environmental health of Maryland.

**Local annual revenue loss indeterminate and discretionary
Statutory**

RECOMMENDATION 13: Support legislation in the Maryland General Assembly that provides a 15% axle weight variance for trucks used in hauling timber from the forests to the sawmills during the June-September period only. This provision would afford parity between forestry and agriculture. At present, trucks hauling corn, soybeans and wheat are granted this 15% axle variance on a similar 4-month seasonal basis. Moreover, "trees" are defined as an agricultural product under the law.

**\$0
Statutory**

RECOMMENDATION 14: Provide Executive Leadership that promotes public understanding and support of renewable energy projects which utilize biomass as a fuel source. Legislation enacted by the 2000 Maryland General Assembly -- the *Maryland Clean Energy Incentive Act* -- authorizes a 0.85 cents per kilowatt hour income tax credit for electricity generated for sale with biomass as a clean-energy fuel source. Biomass includes poultry litter, forestry residues, wind, solar and methane. For example, Dorchester County has embraced a project that will use proven British

technology to produce a 40MW “green power” utility company -- 100,000 tons of forestry residues would be used from local sources. The FibroShore project would be the “first” of its kind in America.

\$0
Administrative

RECOMMENDATION 15: Update every 5 years Maryland’s 1990 Report entitled, *A Guide to Maryland’s Regulation of Forest Products Industry*, and include a regular assessment of forestry BMP [best management practices] compliance. This effort should be coordinated among Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources, appropriate institutions of higher education and the private sector. Envisioned benefits include an improved understanding of the current regulatory environment for forest landowners, including the forest products industry, and an enhanced means of ensuring regulatory compliance through a comprehensive “one stop” regulatory guide.

\$30,000
Budgetary

Chapter 4
Renewable Natural Resource Investment Priority

RECOMMENDATION 16: Create a **Renewable Natural Resource Investment Priority** within an existing State financial assistance program administered by the Department of Business and Economic Development and/or via a new and separate Program.

NOTE: Chapter 433 of the Acts of 2000 creates the Task Force on Resource-Based Industry in Maryland. The Task Force is charged with examining the need for, and the feasibility of, establishing a finance development authority to assist Maryland’s farming, fishing, forestry and mining extraction industries with loans, financing, training and technical and business planning assistance services and considering the types of loans, financing, training, technical and business planning assistance services and other programs that a financing development authority should implement. A December 2000 reporting date is required.

In short, Recommendation 16 could be advanced for further consideration by the Task Force on Resource-Based Industry which would be consistent with its statutory responsibility.

\$5 million for 5 years beginning with fiscal year 2002
Statutory and Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 17: Encourage the Department of Business and Economic Development -- in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources -- to work with local offices of economic development statewide in promoting an understanding of the environmental benefits attendant to forest stewardship management on privately-owned lands and the economic benefits of assisting Maryland’s forest products industry in the modernization of sawmills and creation of new

furniture making and other value added companies.

\$0
Administrative

RECOMMENDATION 18: Encourage the Secretary of Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources to re-institute Maryland’s Forest Products Utilization and Marketing Program with appropriate staff resources in a timely manner.

\$100,000
Budgetary

Chapter 5

Maryland’s Future Forest Legacy

RECOMMENDATION 19: Enhance primary and secondary education curricula development by Maryland’s Department of Education -- in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources and other interested stakeholder groups -- that focuses on the values, benefits and management of trees and forests to Maryland’s ecology and economy.

\$300,000
Administrative and Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 20: Expand special interest publications and Internet resources by appropriate agencies within the Executive Branch of Maryland State Government in order to timely provide to appropriate stakeholders information on the following: (1) forest management; (2) habitat values; (3) owners’ rights and responsibilities; (4) market information; (5) conservation opportunities; (6) water quality with reference to the activities of the tributary teams and protection of drinking water supply; and (7) such planning tools, programmatic and research information as may be available.

Indeterminate
Administrative and Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 21: Establish a 4-year urban forestry degree at the University of Maryland no later than fiscal year 2002.

Indeterminate
Administrative and Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 22: Request the Governor to send a letter of support to the National Research Council favoring its recommendation for the creation of a National Forest Research Council vested with national coordinating responsibilities attendant to the nation’s forest resource needs.

\$0
Administrative

RECOMMENDATION 23: Expand Maryland’s Forest Stewardship Program to include financial resources to provide formal recognition for Maryland’s estimated 130,000 non-industrial private forest landowners. Such recognition should be afforded to those landowners whose stewardship contributions merit emulation throughout the State.

\$10,000
Budgetary

Chapter 6
Urban Forest Land Interface

RECOMMENDATION 24: Direct DNR to conduct a statewide prevention planning (risk, hazard, value, insect and disease control, etc.) assessment that focuses on Maryland’s interface/intermix areas utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/ArcView Technology. The results will be used to develop an efficient management planning model for the DNR Forest Service.

\$35,000 for Fiscal Year 2002 only
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 25: Direct DNR to initiate a Strategic Forest Land Assessment and update the assessment every 5 years for purposes of identifying those forest lands that are critical for their environmental as well as their economic benefits.

\$125,000 for Fiscal Year 2002 only
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 26: Initiate a round table discussion in Spring 2001 among representatives from the Maryland Association of Counties, the Maryland Municipal League, the State Firemen’s Association, DNR’s Forest Service and others to determine how wildfire suppression efforts can best be strengthened and coordination enhanced among all providers of fire and rescue services within the State of Maryland. The findings/recommendations stemming from the round table discussion should be reported to the Maryland General Assembly and to attendees at the 2002 summer meetings of MACO and MML, respectively.

\$0
Administrative

Chapter 7

Urban Forestry -- A Smart Future for Maryland's Communities

Recommendations embodied in this Chapter are reflected in the existing recommendations noted throughout this Report.

RECOMMENDATION 27: Request the Governor to direct the Department of Transportation to provide adequate funding to local governments for purposes of expansion/maintenance of urban street tree cover adjacent to public rights of way.

\$0 -- \$1 million shift in use of federal/State highway funds²
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 28: Direct DNR Forest Service to develop at least two pilot projects with special emphasis on traditionally under served neighborhoods and older, established communities to use data and recommendations developed by the Strategic Forest Initiative as a guide for local governments in their planning, management, linkage, preservation and restoration decisions regarding urban forest resources.

\$100,000
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 29: Direct DNR to create regional forest consortia in several areas of Maryland to develop cost of community services studies which specifically include the loss of forest resources and the fiscal impact of residential development and its significance for creation of forest resource fragmentation and effect on watersheds.

\$140,000
Budgetary

RECOMMENDATION 30: Encourage the Forest Conservancy District Boards to provide advice and input into the development of county-based, green infrastructure plans.

\$0
Administrative

RECOMMENDATION 31: Establish and provide funding to allow DNR to institute an Urban Forest Monitoring Program to assess the extent and conditions of the State's urban forests via periodic surveys.

\$100,000
Budgetary

²Currently the State provides funding for sidewalk construction and utility relocation in urban areas. The Task Force recommends comparable funding be provided for tree maintenance, conservation and replacement within urban areas.

RECOMMENDATION 32: Establish a statewide goal to increase tree cover in metropolitan and urban areas to 40% of total land area within a targeted 10-year period and assist local governments in their efforts to expand urban tree canopy cover within their respective jurisdictions through a neighborhood matching grant program.

\$100,000
Budgetary

Chapter 8

Managing for the Future

RECOMMENDATION 33: Direct DNR to enhance the sustainable management of the State’s publicly-owned forests and parks for wildlife, water, aesthetics, biodiversity and wood production and passive recreation by more thoroughly integrating the expertise that exists within the Public Lands and Forest Service units to achieve a greater level of interagency decision-making and collaboration.

\$0
Administrative

RECOMMENDATION 34: Develop Memorandums of Understanding between Maryland’s Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources in areas of mutual responsibility pertinent to natural resource land management and regulation. With the multitude of land preservation programs developed and coordinated by these agencies -- Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, Rural Legacy Program, Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP), etc. -- a strengthened partnership will help ensure the continued conservation of Maryland’s coveted natural resources into the 21st Century.

\$0
Administrative

RECOMMENDATION 35: Ensure that an appointed representative from Maryland’s forest community always serves on the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and that Maryland’s forestry conservancy district boards play a pivotal role in helping to approve individual applications under the Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. These actions are consistent with and responsive to the intent of the law creating the Foundation.

\$0
Administrative

The Maryland Forestry Task Force Final Report

Overview

Maryland's forests have provided a multitude of benefits to its residents for centuries. Originally covering approximately 95% of the State, forests have retreated before the growth and expansion of the populace to a point where they now cover only 40% of the land area.³ Today, as more and more people live and work in Maryland, forests face many threats; yet, they are the best land use for protecting the water quality of a state treasure -- the Chesapeake Bay -- as prescribed below.

Forests and the practice of forestry -- commonly referred to as silviculture by the Society of American Foresters -- are very important to the future health of the Chesapeake Bay. Smart Growth policies that seek to control growth should use forests and forestry as an important component for the following reasons:

First, improving the health and water quality of the Chesapeake Bay starts with activities on the land. Forests are a solution to non-point source pollution.

Second, healthy, managed, productive forests will help with the retention of renewable natural resource-based industries via working landscapes.

Third, stopping sprawl, curbing forest fragmentation and suppressing uncontrolled fire will have positive management benefits for the urban/rural interface.

The Forest System

Understanding the intricacies of the forest system is a first step towards appreciating the mission of the Maryland Forestry Task Force. Courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program in partnership with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and U.S. Forest Service, this understanding has been facilitated as discussed herein.

Forests work like our circulatory systems, constantly moving air, water and food in and out of the leaves, branches, trunks, roots and soil.

The top layer of the forest is called the CANOPY. This leafy roof of the forest provides protection for many species of birds and butterflies and creates a cooler climate within the forest during the summer. Just below the canopy is the UNDERSTORY – a layer of smaller trees and shrubs. Here, young trees begin to grow up to replace older ones as they die. The next layer, called the FOREST FLOOR, includes the small plants that live close to the ground. This layer provides shelter and seeds and other food for wildlife. The fourth layer is the SOIL under our feet.

Consider the following:

1. The CANOPY of the forest captures rainfall and protects the ground surface. It can capture 30% of the rain during a heavy storm or 100% of a light rain.

³U.S. Forest Service, Forest Survey Data, 1999.

2. Trees use sunlight, carbon dioxide and water to make sugar, the tree's main food source. Through this process -- called PHOTOSYNTHESIS -- carbon dioxide (emitted by cars and smokestacks) is taken out of the air, while oxygen is released. Water, pumped from the soil by the tree's roots, is also released into the air -- a process called TRANSPIRATION. One maple tree can transpire over 400 gallons of clean water each day.
3. Forests serve as a FILTER for floods and runoff. They slow the flow of water and trap sediments and chemicals it may be carrying. One acre of forested buffer can trap 2 tons of sediment.
4. INFILTRATION -- the forest floor is highly absorbent and stores vast amounts of nutrients and water. When wet, forest soils can convert harmful nitrates to nitrogen gas through a process called DENITRIFICATION. The nitrogen gas is then released into the atmosphere. The roots also anchor the tree firmly in the ground, helping to prevent soil erosion.
5. Tree roots also remove nutrients and FILTER pollutants from shallow groundwater flowing beneath the surface on its way to a stream.⁴

Benefits of Managed Forests

Consider the benefits attendant to a well-managed forest:

Water Quality

Healthy streams and watersheds are linked to trees. Acting as a "sponge", forests capture rainfall, reduce runoff, maintain streamflow, filter nutrients and sediment and stabilize soils. When streams are buffered by surrounding forests, the amount of excess nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous) washing into the stream is significantly reduced. Nutrient pollution is the number one problem facing the Chesapeake Bay. Forests are one of the least polluting types of land use. Although they cover 60% of the land in the [entire] Bay watershed, forests contribute less than 14% of total nitrogen loads and 3% of phosphorous. Large areas of heavy forest are essential to keeping our water clean.

Habitat for Fish and Wildlife

Healthy forests provide food, shelter, nesting sites and safe migration paths for the Chesapeake's aquatic and land animals. Streamside forests shade the water below, maintaining cooler water temperatures in the summer -- an important factor for spawning fish. Even the decaying leaves and wood are an essential part of the Chesapeake food chain.

Air Quality

Airborne pollution is an increasing problem for the Bay. Forests keep our air clean by absorbing or

⁴**Chesapeake Bay -- Forests Matter**, excerpts from a poster produced by the Chesapeake Bay Program in partnership with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the U.S. Forest Service northeastern area.

trapping nitrogen, particulates, and other pollutants in the atmosphere that are released by cars, factories, farming and construction.

Recreation and Products of the Forest

The forest offers us a place to reflect and experience natural beauty and solitude. It also offers a place for active outdoor recreation -- like fishing, hiking, camping and cross-country skiing. Forests also serve other material needs -- producing wood for paper, building materials and even fabrics for rayon. In addition, foods and medicines grow in our forests. The forest products industry is a vital source of jobs for rural areas and smaller cities in the Bay region. ⁵

NOTE: A recent study of the *Economic Importance of the Maryland Forest Products Industry* -- noted as a pillar of the State's rural economy -- shows the industry to be an annual \$2.2 billion economic engine.⁶

State Policy on Forestry

"It is the policy of the State to encourage economic management and scientific development of its forests and woodlands to maintain, conserve and improve the soil resources of the State so that an adequate source of forest products is preserved for the people...When these interests can be served through cooperative efforts of private forest landowners, with the assistance of the State, it is the policy of the State to encourage, assist and guide private ownership in the management and fullest economic development of privately owned forest lands."

Section 5-602 of the Natural Resources Article, Annotated Code of Maryland

Clearly, State lawmakers realize the environmental and economic importance attributable to sustainable forest management. Indeed, the Executive Order creating the Maryland Forestry Task Force echoes this statutory policy, especially in view of the Task Force's charge dealing with promoting economic incentives and assessing the economic impact of the forest products industry.

Owners of the Forest

Forty percent of Maryland is forested, nearly 2.4 million acres. It comes as a surprise to many to learn that only about 10% of this amount is owned by the government. The rest -- 2.2 million acres, or 90% -- is privately owned by non-industrial, small landowners whose average plot is less than 20 acres.

Private landowners are encouraged to practice forest stewardship and leave the land and its resources in better condition for future generations. Managing forest resources ensures the continuation of many

⁵**Chesapeake Bay -- Forests Matter.**

⁶The study entitled, *The Economic Importance of the Maryland Forest Products Industry*, is available through Maryland's Department of Natural Resources.

forest benefits including improved water quality, wildlife species and habitat diversity, recreation, timber, aesthetics and air quality. A well thought out resource conservation plan helps landowners identify and recognize the value of their forest land and better predict the effects of any resource activity.⁷

Surprisingly, approximately 25% of the privately owned forest land is currently under management. It is estimated that 75% of the land needs to be under management to have a stable, productive land base to sustain the ecosystems and industries on which they are based. Surveys of nonindustrial private forest landowners repeatedly point out what they most desire is some professional advice (not necessarily planning assistance) from a forester or other natural resource specialist regardless of whether they will manage their forest for timber or other values as their primary goal. Further, these surveys often reveal that landowners routinely rank timber production or income generation behind aesthetic enjoyment, passive or active recreation and habitat improvement.

In Maryland there are over 130,000 such private forest landowners. It is to them we must reach out if we are to strengthen Maryland's forest resource management capabilities. It is to them we must appeal if we are to avoid the conversion of forest land use to less desirable, in fact less beneficial, uses.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Enhance landowner outreach efforts by various stakeholders and pursue other strategies intended to realize forest stewardship plans on 75% of privately owned forest acreage (approx. 1.7 mil. acres)-- lands deemed manageable and/or economically viable by the landowner -- within the next 10 years. Succeeding Chapters in this Report will identify recommended financial incentives, landowner outreach efforts and other strategies to help achieve the 75% goal.

⁷Forest Stewardship, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service, brochure.

Chapter 1

Maryland's Threatened Forests

Forests in Maryland once covered more than 95% of the State. Today, about 40% of the State is forested. The principal causal factor is an expanding population. In short, with an expanding population, comes the decline in available open space land to accommodate residential, commercial and industrial development.

NOTE: Indeed, the idea behind the State's transfer tax -- a real estate transaction tax which funds Program Open Space and the Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation -- was to make people who individually benefit from development pay a tax with the attendant proceeds utilized for the acquisition of open space land for the future benefit of the entire citizenry. Through fiscal year 1997: (1) over \$600 million has been allocated to State and local governments assisting in the acquisition of approximately 200,000 acres under **PROGRAM OPEN SPACE**⁸; and (2) there were 2,277 preservation districts covering more than 300,000 acres created under the **AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION FOUNDATION**, including the purchase of easements on 968 properties totaling 140,000 acres.⁹ Moreover, Governor Glendening's nationally acclaimed Smart Growth Initiative is also designed to curb development pressures and facilitate an expansive green infrastructure landscape. Under Maryland's **RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM**, the State could protect up to 200,000 acres of resource lands by the year 2011, depending upon funding availability.

Expanding Population

Consider the impact of Maryland's projected population growth into the 21st Century:

The 1990 census population for the State of Maryland was 4,780,753.

Current projections for the year 2000 place Maryland's population at 5,244,450, an increase of 9.7%.

The projected population for the year 2010 is 5,677,000 which is an increase of 18.8% from 1990 and an increase of 8.3% from the year 2000.

This increased population is accounted for mainly in Montgomery, Prince George's, Howard, Frederick, Anne Arundel, Charles and Carroll counties. Each of these counties are expected to increase their populations by a minimum of 25,000 during the ten year period. This represents 76% of the total projected population increase for the State of Maryland for the period 2000 to 2010

⁸**Issue Papers -- 1998 Legislative Session**, Department of Legislative Services (December 1997), page 291.

⁹**Government Services in Maryland -- Legislative Handbook Volume II**, Department of Legislative Services (November 1998), page 261.

In addition, Harford, Baltimore and Calvert counties have population increases projected at greater than 20,000. When combined with the aforementioned counties, this accounts for 91% of the total expected population increase for the State of Maryland.¹⁰

Projections by the Maryland Department of Planning estimated that between 1990 and 2015 the area dominated by urban development will increase to a total of 1.5 million acres. This is an increase of 48%. The total area developed may be 25% of Maryland.

Loss of Forest Land

Couple this realization with documented forest land loss -- during the 1985 through 1997 period as reported by Maryland's Office of Planning -- and a disturbing land use pattern unfolds. A summary of the study's findings is presented below.

Loss in Forest Land Use in Maryland (by County) -- 1985 to 1997

County	1985 Acres	1997 Acres	85-97 Change	% Change 85-97
Anne Arundel	128,667	111,662	(17,015)	-13.22%
Allegany	212,150	205,111	(7,039)	-3.32%
Baltimore	144,985	133,427	(11,558)	-7.97%
Baltimore City	4,354	4,206	(148)	-3.39%
Calvert	84,985	69,797	(15,188)	-17.87%
Cecil	91,434	86,000	(5,434)	-5.94%
Charles	197,305	177,855	(19,450)	-9.86%
Carroll	69,050	67,995	(1,055)	-1.53%
Caroline	68,667	65,698	(2,969)	-4.32%
Dorchester	146,795	127,754	(19,041)	-12.97%
Frederick	134,293	130,681	(3,675)	-2.74%
Garrett	297,542	292,578	(4,964)	-1.67%
Harford	105,673	97,290	(8,383)	-7.93%
Howard	63,017	52,128	(10,889)	-17.28%

¹⁰Report to the Joint Chairmen on the Statewide Needs Assessment for Mental Health Services, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, December 1, 1998, page 6.

County	1985 Acres	1997 Acres	85-97 Change	% Change 85-97
Kent	48,229	46,873	(1,356)	-2.81%
Montgomery	95,868	95,292	(576)	-0.60%
Prince George's	153,330	130,525	(22,805)	-14.87%
Queen Anne's	69,223	63,665	(5,558)	-8.03%
St. Mary's	133,628	125,708	(7,920)	-5.93%
Somerset	89,245	87,102	(2,143)	-2.40%
Talbot	46,461	41,932	(4,529)	-9.75%
Washington	114,417	107,423	(6,994)	-6.11%
Wicomico	113,952	107,063	(6,889)	-6.05%
Worcester	167,020	166,978	(42)	-0.03%
All Counties	2,780,300	2,594,682	(185,618)	-6.68%

Source: Data provided by Maryland's Department of Planning

These figures reveal an estimated loss of 14,000 forested acres per year during the 1985 through 1997 period...*evidence of the need to encourage forest land retention through financial incentives and other means as noted throughout this Report in a comprehensive effort to help curb comparable forest land losses in the future.*

NOTE: Information recently made available to the Task Force -- via DNR and the U.S. Forest Service -- speaks to a Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) of Maryland's forest system, Maryland's fifth statewide FIA to date. This study documents forest use, growth and conversion by species type and geographical location..it has been 13 years since the last FIA was conducted. Two attachments are provided to this Report entitled, **Percent Forest Land Cover by County 1986 and 1999**; and **Change in Distribution of Land Class by Inventory Year**, respectively.

Fragmentation and Parcelization

The loss of this forest land base to converted uses and the resulting fragmentation of forest land represents the most critical issue that impacts the effective and efficient management of the forest resources of the State.

Fragmentation of forest land (e.g. loss of forests to other land uses) creates patterns of forest/non-forest on the landscape and results in the loss of wildlife habitat, increases the potential for additional development pressures in designated non-growth areas and impacts the ability of the

remaining forested acreage to sustain an economic viability.

Parcelization of forest land (e.g. breaking up of large blocks of forest land owned by a few large owners into smaller blocks of forest land with many small owners) results in many forest benefits being compromised. Also, management options to ensure these benefits become more limited and difficult to implement.

Fragmentation and parcelization of forest land areas often correspond with decreases in the percentage of forest land actively managed. Without silvicultural management, forest health is sometimes overlooked, taken for granted and benefits become less predictable and sometimes incidental.

Green Infrastructure

Challenge

How much forest land is being converted to other uses? What is the tree species make-up of our forest? Are urban forested areas being sustained? Is the removal of wood products (drain) exceeding the ability of the forests to put on growth? Conversely, what are the projected growth rates of the forests into the 21st Century through prudent silvicultural management? What are the current landowner attitudes toward forest ownership?

Depending on the U.S. Forest Service to provide this information -- via the Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) -- once every 10 to 13 years is unacceptable because a 13-year interval is too long a hiatus. Answers to these and many other questions like them are needed on a frequent basis in order that the policy makers of the State, the forest products industry and the landowners and managers of the public and private forest lands can make timely and scientific decisions regarding the forest resource.

Perspective

Federal and State studies have found that during the last half century there have been substantial positive and negative changes in Maryland's 6.3 million acre land base and its use.

NOTE: To help facilitate responsive policy changes that impact Maryland's forest resource base, the Task Force has advanced **Recommendation 2** -- "Adequately fund, implement and strengthen the analysis of an inventory data base concerning Maryland's forest resources that is updated annually and completed statewide every five years." With such data, Maryland officials and lawmakers will be better equipped to document actual forest use, growth and conversion by species type and geographical location.

According to the federal and State studies, land in farms fell from 4.1 million acres in 1950 to 2.2 million acres in 1997, a drop of approximately 1.9 million acres or a 47% decline. As this

occurred, the 1.2 million acres of farm woodland fell to 336,000 acres, a drop of 883,000 acres, with current farm forest holdings at 29% of their acreage a half century ago.

The most recent forest land comparison facts are 1952 vs. 1992. Accordingly:

- The measure that is used for forest land that may be used for timber production is “Commercial Forest Land” (CFL). This acreage fell from 2.9 million acres to 2.4 million acres, a drop of 430,000 acres or a 15% decline.
- Farm forest was the source of most of the decline as their CFL acres fell from 1.3 million acres to 290,000 acres, a drop of 989,000 acres, a 77% drop of 989,000 acres changed use and ownership. Other private holdings gained 453,000 acres rising from 1.3 million acres to 1.8 million acres, a 35% gain.
- Timber industry holdings in Maryland have always been modest. They rose from 57,000 acres to 131,000 acres, a 74,000 acre gain. However, the recent Chesapeake lands deal on the Eastern Shore -- Maryland’s ultimate acquisition of 58,000 acres of forest land on the Eastern Shore, lands formerly owned and managed by the Chesapeake Forest Products Company -- will reduce the industry’s modest land holdings with a commensurate increase in public lands ownership.
- Public forest acres, which have also always been modest, gained 32,000 acres, rising from 214,000 acres to 246,000 acres, a 15% gain.
- The great bulk of Maryland’s forests -- as documented throughout this Report -- are held by an estimated 130,000 non-industrial, private land owners. In the past 50 years, the harvest from their lands has fallen precipitously, -25 million cubic feet a year.

NOTE: All signs point to a major change in the ways these private owners view the role their woodlands should play. Their role as wood providers has fallen. However, the pressures for land conversion to residential-industrial use and support of that infrastructure remains strong.

Recommendations

In order to ensure the long-term integrity of Maryland’s forest resources, policies need to be adopted to accomplish the following:

RECOMMENDATION 2: Adequately fund, implement and strengthen the analysis of an inventory data base concerning Maryland’s forest resources that is updated annually and completed statewide every five years. Ideally, a strengthened partnership with the U.S. Forest Service can be realized. A strengthened partnership with the U.S. Forest Service can be realized because Maryland needs the basic forestry data reflected in the Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) developed by the U.S. Forest Service on a more frequent basis.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Create a Targeted Priority Resource Initiative by an Interagency Workgroup -- comprised of the Departments of Agriculture, Environment, Natural Resources, Planning, University of Maryland [Maryland Cooperative Extension Service], Maryland Association of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League -- to be reviewed and approved by the Governor and the General Assembly's Joint Subcommittee Committee on Program Open Space and Agricultural Land Preservation. Envisioned is an Initiative that would establish priorities governing annual distribution of monies allocated to Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and the Rural Legacy Program in a two-fold way: (1) concentrate significant funds in 10 counties where population growth and the attendant development threat are greatest in order to achieve appropriate Green Infrastructure linkages; and (2) utilize the funds for the promotion and conservation of riparian buffers, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, environmental and passive recreation within those counties bordering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

NOTE: State lawmakers appropriate millions of dollars annually to Maryland's 3 principal land preservation programs -- Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and Rural Legacy Program. All 3 programs speak to different missions, but they do share a commonality of protecting open space land -- Maryland's coveted Green Infrastructure -- from the development pressure exerted by an ever-expanding population. Noteworthy also is the fact the ***Stream ReLeaf Plan*** -- Maryland's plan for achieving Governor Glendening's commitment to the Chesapeake Bay Program that Maryland will create 600 miles of riparian forested buffers by the year 2010 -- speaks to the importance of targeting these programs to "protect high-priority resources."

Chapter 2

Public/Private Role in Sustainability

In the simplest terms, sustainability means the forest land base of the State is maintained and enhanced for its biological productivity and diversity to ensure economic and social opportunities for current and future generations.

Having a sustainable forest resource means balancing the growing, nurturing and harvesting of trees for useful products with conservation and maintaining biological diversity, soil and air quality as well as wildlife and fish habitat. With proper leadership by the State through adoption of sound forestry management on public lands, private landowners may emulate the State's efforts and do what is right for their natural resources. In short the State can lead by example. In doing so on both fronts, Maryland's forest land base can be sustained as a preferred land use.

State Role

The State has an important role in promoting sound forestry management on all forested lands, public and private, and assuring both State agencies and private landowners carry out practices and implement programs that ensure the sustainability of Maryland's forest resources. *Evidence of this responsibility is clearly delineated in the State's statutory policy on forestry as noted above.* The State's role in ensuring the sustainability of the economic, social and ecological benefits derived from private forest lands must be as diverse as the ownership and as innovative as programs encouraged on public lands.

The State role must change with changing growth and ecological pressures. Its role can be viewed as a catalyst for investment, a model for management, an initiator of services and a monitor for change. In Maryland we can uniquely build on local institutional resources and strengthen capacity within State and local forestry organizations. We must promote integration of environmental and economic policies and programs and commit to an integrated, coherent set of State policies for forest resource conservation and sustainability. These roles necessitate new initiatives, clear goals, frequent monitoring, long-term investment, respect for landowners' rights and insistence on forest landowners' continued stewardship responsibilities.

The Role of the Maryland DNR Forest Service

The Maryland DNR Forest Service mission statement directs it to: "Conserve and enhance the quality, quantity, productivity and biological diversity of the forest and tree resources of Maryland. Provide leadership and technical and financial support to inform, involve and empower citizens, local governments and private organizations to take action necessary to accomplish these goals." The Forest Service has foresters and rangers in every county to provide forest landowners with the technical and financial assistance they need to manage their land. In addition, they provide leadership and guidance to communities, governments, private organizations and non-land owning individuals on issues and projects relating to trees and forests.

This is an enormous task made more difficult by rapid urbanization and changing demographics which leads to more landowners, smaller parcels and a shorter time span of ownership (average ownership is turned over every 12 years). *The Task Force is impressed with the range of services provided by the Forest Service staff to Maryland's forest landowners and the depth of commitment that we witnessed during our period of deliberation.*

Forest Stewardship Plans

Forest land can be managed with an emphasis on wildlife, fisheries, streams, wood production, recreational opportunities or with an eye to keeping a healthy woodlot for aesthetic enjoyment. The ultimate goal is to leave the land and its resources in better condition for future generations. Noteworthy in this context are three recent actions:

First, agreement was reached on September 10, 1999 to develop a comprehensive forest management plan on the 58,000 acres the State will ultimately acquire on the Eastern Shore, lands formerly owned and managed by Chesapeake Forest Products Company.

Second, a request to Governor Glendening was made by the lawmakers of District 33 on September 22, 1999 to transfer management responsibility of 550 acres of land -- acreage owned and managed by Crownsville Psychiatric Hospital -- to Forest, Wildlife and Heritage Division of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, conditioned on the development of a comprehensive forest management plan not unlike that envisioned by The Conservation Fund and DNR for the Eastern Shore land acquisition.

Third, a recommendation was advanced in September 1999 by the Western Maryland Agricultural and Natural Resources Task Force (Western Maryland Economic Development Task Force, chaired by The Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates) which encourages Governor Glendening to:

“Enhance DNR’s management of the region’s publicly-owned forest resources for timber production purposes.”

Landowner Role

Resonating throughout this Report is the fact that Maryland’s forests are predominantly owned by private, nonindustrial landowners. These individuals play a key role in helping sustain Maryland’s forest resource base through prudent stewardship. However, how knowledgeable are these forest landowners about the multitude of environmental, ecological and economic benefits associated with their forest lands?

Testimony presented to the Task Force by DNR’s Forest Service in May 1999 is discerning. Accordingly, “only about 5% of landowners have sought or received professional forestry assistance.” Whether or not the 5% figure is accurate, it does speak to the low interest or lack of understanding about forestry management exhibited by Maryland’s principal holders of the State’s forested resources. DNR further noted the following:

“It is widely acknowledged that most forest landowners don’t have a clue what to do with their forest land or who to call about it. As with so many circumstances, until it is personally relevant to the landowner, the message of forest management doesn’t penetrate the consciousness of the intended receiver. Information targeted to the general public about the value of forests and trees does help create an awareness of the resource but does not have the personal relevance necessary for a specific landowner to “do” something with his forest land.”

As noted in the OVERVIEW section of the Report, the Task Force supports a goal of providing technical assistance in the form of management planning on 75% of Maryland's privately owned forest acreage. *It also advances -- as noted in the **Recommendation Section** below -- a comparable goal for publicly owned forest land deemed conducive to such plans, meaning that reaching 75% of Maryland's forests with plans may be more achievable for the "manageable and/or economically viable" forest land.* These lands would be of a scale that would lend themselves more readily to sustainable forest management. Realizing the private sector 75% goal will require a unique public/private partnership that incorporates the involvement of many impacted stakeholders within the public and private sector.

Adoption of such plans -- under the auspices of resource professionals -- will help ensure forest sustainability because of their contributions in helping accomplish the following¹¹:

**COORDINATING, IMPROVING AND MORE EFFICIENTLY PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE
RESOURCE ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE LANDOWNERS**

**PROVIDING PRIVATE LANDOWNERS WITH RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS WHICH ARE
DESIGNED TO MEET THEIR OBJECTIVES**

**IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITAT, WETLANDS, WATER AND AIR QUALITY, AND INCREASING
OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

**IMPROVING HARVESTING PRACTICES AND ENSURING ADEQUATE REGENERATION OF
HARVESTED STANDS.**

Role of Forestry Boards

Maryland is fortunate to have a network of individuals who serve voluntarily on Forestry Boards as advocates for our forests.

Twenty-four unique Forestry Boards, in partnership with Maryland's Department of Natural Resources Forest Service, strive to promote appreciation and concern for forests and trees. Board members support the concept of wise conservation, management and use of trees and forests in Maryland. The Boards, one in each of Maryland's 23 subdivisions and Baltimore City, together function as a State Association of Forest Conservancy District Boards. Forestry Boards provide leadership for the improvement of the environment in urban and suburban areas, and educate people about the variety of benefits trees and forests provide.

Each Forestry Board has its own local orientation. Although forestry issues around the State differ, Forestry Boards exist to promote perpetuation of our forest resources. Many considerations must be balanced to meet the needs of people and trees. Active voices on the Forestry Boards represent varied constituencies and strive to find an acceptable community voice to keep Maryland's forests green and growing.

The boards were established in 1943 to assist the State's Forest Service with the promotion of forest management on privately owned woodlands. Their original goal was to help assure a supply of wood fiber products through scientific forest management. Today their role has been expanded to include the improvement of the environment in urban and suburban areas and to educate people about the variety of benefits forests provide. Board members work closely with project and Watershed Bay

¹¹ **Forest Stewardship**, Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service, brochure.

foresters throughout the State. Forestry Boards primarily serve as advisory, educational and facilitating bodies. In the Chesapeake Bay Critical area, Forestry Boards are responsible for reviewing and approving timber harvesting plans. Forestry Boards, acting locally or as a State Association, review proposed legislation and represent the interest of forestry with local, state and federal legislatures.

Although Board membership varies by county, the common requirements include an interest in the future of our trees and forests, a willingness to work and a desire to see our renewable forest resources used wisely. Local leaders from planning and zoning, tree farmers, loggers, arborists, educators, farmers, foresters, engineers, environmental planners, forest landowners and government representatives are but a few of the interested groups serving on the Boards. Members are appointed by the Director of the Department of Natural Resources-Forest Service, after recommendation by the local Board.

Clearly, Maryland's Forestry Boards are well positioned to help educate forest landowners and others about the multitude of environmental, ecological and economic benefits attendant to well-managed forest lands.

Role of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service

On June 2, 1999, the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service (University of Maryland) issued a Report entitled, *Extension Natural Resource Education Programs: Accomplishments, Exploratory Issues & Areas of Concern*. The overview section noted the following:

“Maryland contains a diverse natural resource base of forests, wildlife and related water areas that is being heavily impacted by conversion of forest land into suburban development, and a change in the ownership demographics of the resources. The increasing population pressure on resources accelerates the parcelization of the landscape into smaller units that are more difficult to manage with traditional forest and wildlife management techniques. At the same time, education programs for more traditional landowner and professional audiences must keep pace with changing issues and needs. There is an increasing need for unbiased information to educate different audiences. This will require the development of new resources and new program delivery techniques, which the Cooperative Extension Service is well-positioned to provide.”

NOTE: The Maryland Cooperative Extension Service publishes a multitude of documents and reports on an ongoing basis throughout the year and sponsors workshops across the State. The publications written by and workshops sponsored by the Extension are impressive.

On May 13, 1999, James C. Wade, Ph.D. (Associate Director of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service) informed the Maryland Forestry Task Force of the following:

“Maryland Cooperative Extension Service is limited in its capacity to provide needed forest lands management educational programs in the State (the Extension has only two staff positions to assist in this effort at this time). Recent initiatives by the Governor to increase the use of buffers (in riparian areas) including forest lands for the improvement of

water quality accent the need to provide quality educational programs to urban land users (homeowners, public lands managers and planners) on appropriate management and use of woodlands. Similarly, recent tree damage by ice storms, soil erosion and related damage extends the need for such programs. Wildlife issues in suburban areas are escalating. To more completely meet the needs for educational programs, additional resources are required.”

The Task Force agrees.

Gypsy Moth Problem

Gypsy moths pose a serious threat to the health of Maryland’s forests, especially the hardwoods. The State of Maryland offers a cost-sharing program to certain qualifying forest landowners that helps offset the costs with spraying. However, needed revenues have not been available to encourage large-scale landowner participation. Experts forecast a Spring 2001 hatch of gypsy moths which could have a serious impact within certain regions of Maryland. The Task Force believes that sufficient funds should be made available to qualifying forest landowners to help prevent large scale forest defoliation which has occurred in Maryland during the last few years.

Challenges

Maryland enjoys and benefits from abundant forests. Their use, management and conservation, was the focus of our work in light of the charge given the Task Force by the Governor. During the course of our deliberations, forums and briefings, a number of widely shared areas of concern were expressed. The Task Force identified a number of critical challenges that must be addressed if Maryland is to ensure its forest legacy during the 21st Century and beyond.

These challenges include, but are not limited to, the following:

- promoting public and private commitment in order to ensure the long-term health and integrity of Maryland’s forest ecosystems.
- developing policies and programs grounded in an appreciation of the importance that private decisions and contributions make to the future of Maryland’s forest resources.
- enhancing the capacity of DNR’s Forest Service to better coordinate and facilitate the multiple roles played by impacted stakeholders in Maryland’s forest system to help achieve a reasonable balance between the ecological, environmental and economic benefits associated with sound forestry management.
- strengthening the information base upon which informed decisions can be made by policy leaders and program managers about the use, management and protection of private forest lands.
- encouraging innovative strategies that will result in higher levels of investment in

sustaining forests as places conducive for clean air/water, recreational activities, wildlife habitat enhancement and economic opportunities.

- creating greater citizenry awareness about the benefits of a healthy, managed and conserved forest resource for Maryland’s future.

Recommendations

Sustainability of Maryland’s forest resource base rests solely with the stewardship role exercised by landowners within the public and private sector, both individually and collectively. A new approach to enhanced forest sustainability must be initiated for the 21st Century; it’s the legacy to future generations as proclaimed by Governor Glendening in the Executive Order creating the Maryland Forestry Task Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS 4: Develop, upgrade and/or modify forest stewardship plans on all DNR-managed public lands that speak to fish and wildlife habitat improvement, natural heritage, recreation and aesthetics, soil and water conservation and wood products consistent with the 75% goal recommended for privately-owned forest lands within the 10-year time period. Envisioned are the development of forest stewardship plans comparable to the Eastern Shore plan being developed and the one anticipated in Anne Arundel County on the Crownsville State Psychiatric hospital grounds (attachments 1 and 2, respectively).

RECOMMENDATION 5: Encourage future forest land acquisitions that come into the public domain to also be accompanied with the development of forest stewardship plans when deemed appropriate. Such plans will help ensure that sound forestry management practices will contribute to the maintenance, health and vitality of our forests. To reiterate, attachments 1 and 2 speak to the development of forest stewardship plans on the State’s recently acquired lands on the Eastern Shore and a proposal to develop such a plan on lands held by the State via Crownsville Psychiatric Hospital in Anne Arundel County. These directives are precedent-setting in nature and worthy of emulation in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Encourage the Department of Budget and Management to meet and confer with the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service for the purpose of:

- Realizing a clearer understanding of the Extension’s mission and accomplishments concerning its educational outreach efforts to Maryland’s forest land owners, homeowners, etc.
- Enhancing the coordination between the Extension and other State entities responsible for effecting similar landowner outreach efforts.
- Developing alternative ways and means to strengthen the Extension’s ability to more completely meet the needs for educational programs to forest land owners, homeowners, etc., consistent with its statutory mission. Areas worthy of additional educational efforts relating to natural resources and the environment include:

Forest Management
Wildlife Management
Natural Resources Information Systems
Youth and Natural Resources
Conflict Resolution and Management

RECOMMENDATION 7: Provide, with annual state general fund monies, (1) each Maryland Forest Conservancy District Board with a minimum \$2,000 annual State grant [conditioned on an equal \$1 for \$1 match from the respective boards]; (2) the Coverts Cooperator Program and other related forest landowner outreach programs [University of Maryland -- Maryland Cooperative Extension Service] with a minimum \$50,000 annual non-matching State grant; and (3) DNR with \$330,000 beginning in fiscal year 2002 for new foresters [in conjunction with DNR's responsibility attendant to Recommendation 4] and a minimum \$125,000 annual State appropriation to provide contract funds to professional forest consultants within the private sector. These monies would be utilized exclusively to help facilitate landowner outreach efforts designed to achieve a twin purpose -- (1) adoption of forest stewardship plans on 75% of Maryland's privately owned forests [e.g. lands manageable and economically viable]; and/or (2) provision of professional forestry assistance to forest landowners even if they choose not to develop forest stewardship plans.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Establish a responsive State policy on dealing with forest pest management on a timely and effective basis between the Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The Task Force strongly encourages the Governor to work with the Board of Public Works in securing requisite, emergency funds to help mitigate the problem of forest defoliation and tree loss associated with the Spring 2001 hatch of gypsy moths and thereafter.

Chapter 3

Incentives for Stewardship

The Task Force supports the provision of State financial incentives as a key tool in helping forest landowners resist the temptation from selling their lands for development purposes. The lure of “big dollars” has helped contribute to Maryland’s existing fragmented and parcelized forest resource base. Admittedly, the provision of State financial incentives may not be the single deciding factor that prevents a landowner to sell. However, the Task Force acknowledges the faithful stewardship activities exercised by many of Maryland’s forest landowners and believes modest targeted assistance may help tilt the balance towards conservation rather than development..

Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources presented a Report to the Task Force on January 14, 1999 entitled, *Benefits of Enhanced Forest Landowner Assistance*. A key excerpt from this Report documents the importance of the economic factor in the forest land retention equation.

Benefits of Managed Forests

Forests are the preferred land use in efforts to improve water quality. Years of research has shown that forest is the best form of land use to reduce sedimentation, remove nutrients from groundwater and regulate streamflow during storm events. All of which lead to improved water quality, enhanced habitat for living resources and a better aquatic environment. Healthy, managed, productive forests will help retain resource-based industries by providing working landscapes from which a sustainable supply of resources is available. Many forest landowners rely on the income produced from their forest land whether it is from timber sales, hunting leases, or some non-traditional product. If the resource-based industries cannot operate due to regulatory constraints or insufficient raw material supply, they will close or relocate to other states, taking jobs and associated economic benefits with them. The loss of these industries would leave the landowner with limited management options and, if faced with economic needs, little opportunity for producing cash flow with the most likely option being sale of the land for development.

Clearly, the State’s lead forest-related regulatory agency recognizes the important partnership between forest landowners and forest products industry concerning the health and vitality of forestry as a preferred land use. Both stewardship and economics play critical roles in this partnership.

Stream Relief Plan

On June 30, 1998, Maryland’s 5-year *Stream Relief Plan* was adopted. As previously noted, the Plan identifies strategies for helping realize Maryland’s commitment to plant 600 miles of riparian buffers by the year 2010, consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Riparian Forest Buffer Initiative. Incentives are recognized as a prerequisite strategy in helping attain the 600 mile goal. Accordingly:

“Incentives are widely viewed as the catalyst that prompts large scale landowner participation [*in encouraging landowners to plant riparian buffers*]...The Maryland Forestry Task Force is in a good position to evaluate, develop a consensus for support and pursue the most promising incentives with the State legislature.”¹²

The twin charge to the Task Force -- the Governor’s Executive Order and the *Stream ReLeaf Plan* -- makes clear the priority afforded economic incentives that encourages forest land retention.

Resolution of the National Association of State Foresters on Tax Incentives for Forest Resource Management Practices.

A national perspective on the importance of tax incentives for forest land retention is in order. In January 1999, Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources shared the following information with the Task Force:

SITUATION:

Non-industrial private forest landowners (NIPF) landowners have expressed their desire for tax incentives as a top priority to encourage voluntary financial investing in forest stewardship management during the National Conference on Forest Stewardship in Nebraska City, NE, (April 1994). Likewise, the National Forest Owners Association (NFOA), has lobbied for such tax incentives. The long-term nature of forestry results in sustained resource management over time. Tax incentives offer attractive economic reasons for landowners to practice stewardship management and may result in more forested acres properly managed. Therefore, be it resolved that:

The National Association of State Foresters recommends the USDA Forest Service national leadership encourage the development of tax incentives for voluntary financial investment that properly applies accepted forest stewardship practices.

Income Tax Credit

The Task Force realizes that appeals from developers is a strong motivating force to sell one’s land. Indeed, everyday Maryland’s forests are being covered to a non-forest use. Government cannot provide sufficient incentives on a large scale basis to curb development pressure attendant to an expanding population and the large sums of monies offered by developers. However, the Task Force believes that retention of forest land can be enhanced by the provision of an income tax credit.

¹²Stream ReLeaf -- Planting Maryland’s Streamsides -- A Plan for Restoring and Conserving Riparian Forest Buffers, Department of Natural Resources, June 30, 1998, pages 25 and 29, respectively.

Not envisioned are multiple income tax credits for specific stewardship-related acts. What is envisioned, however, is an income tax credit to those forest landowners who elect to develop a forest stewardship plan on their land...a credit equal to the cost of the actual development of the plan by a licensed, professional forester. In addition, the Task Force believes the incentive should be increased in those areas where land is of special State concern, e.g. the State's defined Critical Area. Lands within the Critical Area that are enrolled in a forest stewardship plan, should be afforded an income tax credit equal to "double" the amount that is offered for plans development outside the Critical Area.

The Task Force realizes this recommendation is a small step forward in helping retain Maryland's forest resource base...but, a positive step that might help curb future development pressure all the same.

Sales Tax Exemption

Reflected within this Report is the fact that Maryland's forest products industry does not own significant tracts of forest land as in other states. Instead, Maryland's forest land is principally owned by private, non-industrial landowners. Hence, forest landowners need the industry and industry needs the landowner for both to retain economic viability. This recommendation proposes a sales tax break to the forest products industry for equipment used in the primary and secondary manufacturing process, including any attendant pollution control equipment necessary for this work.

The Task Force views a sales tax exemption in this regard as a key incentive in helping to encourage the continued economic viability of Maryland's forest products industry and, in doing so, helps ensure the continued retention of forest land in Maryland, albeit in a limited way. Moreover, such an incentive may help spurn additional secondary processing enterprises which are in short supply within the State of Maryland.

Local Property Tax Credits

Senate Bill 563 of 1998 authorizes the governing body of Dorchester County to grant a property tax credit on: (1) agricultural land that is subject to a nutrient management plan or that is developing a nutrient management plan for implementation; or (2) forest land that is subject to a forest management plan or similar agreement. In short, Dorchester County is the first jurisdiction in Maryland to "use economic incentives to help forest landowners and businesses maintain their land for productive forest usage and impede the conversion of such land for residential, commercial or industrial development [a key charge of the Governor to the Task Force]."

Encouraging more forest landowners to adopt forest conservation management plans is a primary concern of this Report. The fact that only 25% of Maryland's privately owned forest land is subject to such a plan to date -- a plan that advances multiple ecological and/or economic opportunities -- is disturbing. Equally disturbing is the realization the 25% figure translates only to an estimated 10% of Maryland's 130,000 non-industrial private forest landowners. Indeed, the importance of securing forest conservation management plans in Maryland is highlighted by actions noted in the previous chapter.

Especially noteworthy is the following excerpt from a July 2000 Report prepared by the Environmental Law Institute for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation entitled, *Forests for the Bay*, that speaks to the importance of property tax breaks for forest landowners:

“Some evidence suggests that reduced property taxes can make a significant difference in the behavior of the heirs of farms and woodlands who do not live on the forested land. Such owners are more likely to retain lands in forest and refrain from subdivision if they do not incur hefty annual costs in the form of property taxes on land that is not generating a regular annual income. Addition of a management plan requirement may make these absentee owners better stewards of their own lands.”

Truck Weights for Hauling Timber

Section 24-109 of Maryland’s Transportation Article (Maryland Annotated Code) affords a 15% axle load limit tolerance for certain vehicles carrying certain agricultural crops during certain times of the year. The eligible crops and attendant seasonal allowance are noted below:

Wheat, for the period from June 1 to August 15
Corn, for the period from July 1 to December 1
Soybeans, for the period from September 1 to December 31
Vegetable crops, for the period from June 1 to October 31

This proposal seeks to afford “parity” between the agricultural community (farm trucks) and the community (forest trucks). “Forests” are defined as an “farm product” under section 10-601 of Maryland’s Agriculture Article (Maryland Annotated Code). Consequently, envisioned by the Task Force is a statutory approval that enables trucks hauling harvested timber from the woods to the sawmill the same seasonal 15% variance currently afforded farm vehicles carrying eligible crops. Ideally, a May through September seasonal period is advocated by the forest products industry.

Renewable Energy Production

Harvard University and others recently published a report entitled, *Death, Disease & Dirty Power*, which speaks to the harmful effects associated with emissions from fossil fuel power plants, e.g. “the greenhouse effect.” Emissions from biomass fueled power plants sidestep these problems. Such recognition was afforded by the 2000 Maryland General Assembly when they enacted the *Maryland Clean Energy Incentive Act* -- the Act provides an income tax credit to producers of electricity that utilize biomass [poultry litter, forest residues, wind and solar] as fuel sources.

The Task Force trusts the Administration and General Assembly will continue to support renewable energy projects because of the multiple, long-term environmental and economic benefits associated with them.

Assessment of Existing State/local Land Use Regulations

A frequently voiced concern of forest landowners and the forest products industry deals with Maryland’s regulatory environment pertinent to forestry activities. In 1990, Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources -- through a grant agreement with the Coalition of Northeastern Governors Policy Research Center -- issued a Report entitled, *A Guide to Maryland’s Regulation of Forest Products Industries*. This Report not only identified existing State land use regulations for Maryland’s forest landowners and the forest products industry, but it also served as

a single source of reference to aid in answering institutional inquiries by business, government and the legal profession concerning the forest products industry. The Report has not been updated since 1990.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 9: Provide financial incentives to private landowners for purposes of encouraging them to retain and manage their forested lands in order to help prevent the permanent conversion of their lands to non-forested use.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Support legislation in the Maryland General Assembly that provides a one-time only State income tax credit equal to 100% of the costs associated with the development of a forest stewardship plan for interested forest landowners. For forest landowners who own land within the Critical Area, as defined by State law, the State income tax credit would be equal to “double” the amount of the actual cost of the stewardship plan. To illustrate, if a stewardship plan was developed outside the Critical Area at \$350 plus \$8 per acre, the State income tax credit would be equal to a like amount. The credit would double if the forest stewardship plan was developed within the Critical Area.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Support legislation in the Maryland General Assembly that provides a sales tax exemption for all equipment and pollution control devices directly used in the primary and secondary wood manufacturing process but, only in those jurisdictions designated as *One Maryland* counties. In 1999, the General Assembly enacted the One Maryland Economic Development Program for Distressed Counties which designated certain counties as economically distressed and worthy of State financial assistance. One Maryland jurisdictions -- Allegany, Garrett, Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, Worcester and Baltimore City -- are the remaining strongholds for Maryland’s forest products industry, save Baltimore City. The intent is to help retain and attract new jobs in impoverished areas of Maryland through the encouragement of sawmill modernization and creation of new furniture making and other value added companies.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Support statewide enabling legislation -- patterned after Senate Bill 563 of 1998 for Dorchester County only -- that authorizes all Maryland counties to grant a property tax credit up to 100% on: (1) agricultural land that is subject to a nutrient management plan or that is developing a nutrient management plan for implementation; or (2) forest land that is subject to a forest management plan or similar agreement. Every landowner that steps forward and adopts one of these plans helps define and bestow their own legacy to the future environmental health of Maryland.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Support legislation in the Maryland General Assembly that provides a 15% axle weight variance for trucks used in hauling timber from the forests to the sawmills during the June-September period only. This provision would afford parity between forestry and agriculture. At present, trucks hauling corn, soybean and wheat are granted this 15% axle variance on a similar 4-month seasonal basis. Moreover, “trees” are defined as an

agricultural product under the law.

RECOMMENDATION 14: Provide Executive Leadership that promotes public understanding and support of renewable energy projects which utilize biomass as a fuel source. Legislation enacted by the 2000 Maryland General Assembly -- the *Maryland Clean Energy Incentive Act* -- authorizes a 0.85 cents per kilowatt hour income tax credit for electricity generated for sale with biomass as a clean-energy fuel source. Biomass includes poultry litter, forestry residues, wind, solar and methane. For example, Dorchester County has embraced a project that will use proven British technology to produce a 40MW “green power” utility company -- 100,000 tons of forestry residues would be used from local sources. The FibroShore project would be the “first” of its kind in America.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Update every 5 years Maryland’s 1990 Report entitled, *A Guide to Maryland’s Regulation of Forest Products Industry*, and include a regular assessment of forestry BMP [best management practices] compliance. This effort should be coordinated among Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources, appropriate institutions of higher education and the private sector. Envisioned benefits include an improved understanding of the current regulatory environment for forest landowners, including the forest products industry, and an enhanced means of ensuring regulatory compliance through a comprehensive “one stop” regulatory guide.

Chapter 4

Renewable Natural Resource Investment Priority

The Task Force supports the provision of State financial assistance to help Maryland's forest products industry upgrade and modernize its manufacturing equipment in order to enhance operational efficiency and promote job retention/growth within Maryland's rural communities. With ever-increasing societal pressure to limit timber production coupled with escalating demands for more wood products by an expanding population, it is important the industry realize the most efficient yield possible from a renewable, albeit shrinking, forest land base. On a statewide basis, annual forest growth exceeds removal by an estimated 58% because of the stewardship of the resource by industry and forest landowners.

Each person in the U.S. uses the equivalent of 1 tree 100 feet tall each year for their wood and paper needs.

The Task Force is mindful of existing State financial assistance programs administered by the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) that could arguably help facilitate this modernization effort, including the recently enacted *Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority and Fund*, and the *One Maryland Economic Development Program for Distressed Counties*. However, program eligibility criteria are prohibitively restrictive for most forest product companies, in terms of required jobs created and caps on equipment value. The Task Force supports a definitive policy and program aimed at directing financial assistance to the forest products industry for equipment upgrading and manufacturing modernization purposes, subject to eligibility criteria uniquely tailored to meet the industry's special needs.

State's Policy on Forestry

"It is the policy of the State to encourage economic management and scientific development of its forests and woodlands to maintain, conserve and improve the soil resources of the State so that an adequate source of forest products is preserved for the people...When these interests can be served through cooperative efforts of private forest landowners, with the assistance of the State, it is the policy of the State to encourage, assist and guide private ownership in the management and fullest economic development of privately owned forest lands."

Section 5-602 of the Natural Resources Article, Annotated Code of Maryland

Clearly, State lawmakers realize the environmental and economic importance attributable to sustainable forest management. Indeed, the Executive Order creating the Maryland Forestry Task Force echoes this statutory policy, especially in view of the Task Force's charge dealing with promoting economic incentives and assessing the economic impact of the forest products industry.

Industry Profile and Economic Impact

A recent study of the *Economic Importance of the Maryland Forest Products Industry* indicates the industry to be an annual \$2.2 billion economic engine. Several stakeholder groups, including the Task Force, has received in-depth briefings on this study. Such information should be helpful when used by Maryland’s forest community to advance its statutory/budgetary interests.

Smart Growth

Noteworthy is legislative intent embodied in the Rural Legacy Act of 1997 which underscores the importance of retaining resource-based land usage, e.g. sound forest management. Specifically, Section 5-9A-01 of the Natural Resources Article (Maryland Annotated Code) reads as follows:

“The General Assembly declares that...A Rural Legacy Program is established to enhance natural resource, agricultural, forestry and environmental protection while maintaining the viability of resource-based land usage and proper management of tillable and wooded areas through accepted agricultural and silvicultural practices for farm production and timber harvests.”

And on September 10, 1999, when Governor Glendening proudly announced the State’s largest land acquisition in Maryland’s history, this statement from DNR Secretary Taylor-Rogers was included in the official press release:

“This plan [an interim management plan for the State’s initial acquisition of 29,000 acres] will establish management direction to ensure continued protection of natural resources and achieve critical resource restoration. In addition, we must ensure continued viability of the resource-based forestry industry, which is so critical to the health of the Eastern Shore’s economy.”

Clearly, State lawmakers and State officials understand that sound forest management enables Maryland’s forests to remain forests forever.

Forest Product Utilization and Marketing

One of the casualties of the economic recession in the early 1990's was DNR’s Forest Product Utilization and Marketing Program. This Program helped sustain Maryland’s forest resource base by providing requisite information needed to better manage the forest resources on a statewide basis and market forest resources on a regional/international basis. Outlined below is a brief listing of the programs and products performed by DNR’s now defunct Forest Product Utilization and Marketing Program.

Wood Energy
Urban Waste Wood
Wood Exporting Workshops
Forest Products Marketing Directories

Guide to Maryland’s Regulation of Forest Products Industries
Business Development
Forest Products Operators
Annual Timber Drain Assessment
Logger Training
Forest Products Marketing Bulletin
Public Information

In short, if it was related to forest products or the industry in any way, this Program did it. The Task Force believes re-institution of this Program will encourage continuance of a sustainable industry and beneficial woodland management.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 16: Create a Renewable Natural Resource Investment Priority within an existing State financial assistance program administered by the Department of Business and Economic Development and/or via a new and separate Program. In making this recommendation, the Task Force is mindful of the following:

- Legislation was enacted by the 1999 Maryland General Assembly (House Bill 972) that consolidated various existing financial assistance programs administered by the Department of Business and Economic Development into one Fund. However, specific assistance for resource-based industries, *per se*, was not included within this legislation.
- The Forum for Rural Maryland advanced a proposal at the 2000 Maryland General Assembly to address the resource-based industry issue. Legislation was enacted that created a Task Force to study the proposition afforded special financial-assistance related recognition to all of Maryland’s natural resource-based industries, including forestry. At this writing, it appears the Task Force on Resource-Based Industry will recommend legislation for consideration at the 2001 legislative session to include natural resource-based industries within the consolidated fund legislation enacted at the 1999 Session. If so, this particular recommendation of the Task Force will be addressed by the 2001 Maryland General Assembly.

It should also be noted that the Maryland Economic Development Commission -- the entity charged by Governor Glendening to advance the State’s strategic plan for economic development -- identified “forestry” as a defined “growth industry” for State financial support purposes in December 1999.

RECOMMENDATION 17: Encourage the Department of Business and Economic Development -- in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources -- to work with local offices of economic development statewide in promoting an understanding of the

environmental benefits attendant to forest stewardship management on privately-owned lands and the economic benefits of assisting Maryland’s forest products industry in the modernization of sawmills and creation of new furniture making and other value added companies.

RECOMMENDATION 18: Encourage the Secretary of Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources to re-institute Maryland’s Forest Products Utilization and Marketing Program with appropriate staff resources in a timely manner.

Chapter 5

Maryland’s Future Forest Legacy

Introduction

It is important to encourage knowledge, understanding and support for forest values. Starting with the concept of sustainability, current information on Maryland’s Green Infrastructure and broad forest values, a number of specific education and program initiatives should be explored. These long-term investments are basic to continuing the environmental, social and economic contribution of our forest resources. Our earlier recommendations targeted the landowner for technical assistance and outreach purposes. These initiatives are designed to reach out to the public and key stakeholder groups in order to broaden their understanding of long-term forest resource issues, e.g. biodiversity, forest management, etc.

Education and Technical Assistance

Education is a pivotal aspect in achieving broad understanding of critical environmental and public policy issues. Information programs must be prepared for specific groups and the general public. The Task Force has learned that much of this work is already being performed with State help in curriculum materials, field trips and forest youth camps. We want to encourage these efforts and, where appropriate, would like to see them expanded.

Our schedule did not permit us to visit specific school sites. However, the briefings we received on Project Wild, Project Learning Tree and other elementary focused programs was informative and inspiring. Such programs should be more widely available to every school system and special plans made to assure each elementary teacher has access to the training necessary to provide such instruction in the State’s elementary schools. A five-year commitment is supported.

We are deeply concerned to learn the State does not provide an advanced degree in any field of forestry through one of our in-state colleges or universities. In light of the growth pressures facing Maryland, its status as the 5th most densely populated state and the Governor’s priority on Smart Growth, the Task Force strongly recommends support for a 4-year undergraduate degree in urban forestry and other related academic programs targeted for adult and continuing education outreach purposes.

NOTE: Key roles played by Maryland’s Forestry Boards and the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service -- in terms of their educational outreach efforts -- are delineated in Chapter 2.

Forestry Research

Our schedule did not permit a thorough analysis of needed forestry research with a particular emphasis on private owner needs.

We are, however, deeply concerned with the effects of fragmentation and parcelization on such issues as:

Habitat Values
Biodiversity
Disease and Insect Control
Urban and Community Tree Health
Impact of Various Conservation and Preservation Initiatives
Forest Investments and Incentives
Climate Impact of Changing Forest Age, Health and Management

These and other issues suggest a continuing need for funding research and acquiring information to assist Maryland's forest landowners, program managers and policy leaders. Public funding should be continued and, where possible, augmented commensurate with specific needs and potential benefits to Maryland's forest infrastructure. We believe that greater emphasis should be placed on developing specific research initiatives and carrying out these efforts in Maryland's research community, given our State's unique and pressing needs.

NOTE: All land-grant Universities like the University of Maryland receive federal McIntire/Stennis funds that are then distributed to support various research efforts, including research on forestry issues. Since Maryland has no forestry school and therefore no forestry dean, forestry research *per se* in Maryland is seldom undertaken in any meaningful, uniform manner. Consequently, it is important that Maryland's State Forester be encouraged to participate in the process, to the extent permitted, whereby federal McIntire/Stennis funds are allocated.

The absence of a national research coordinating structure and the almost random availability of critical information on broader environmental and natural resource topics, argues for the Task Force's strong support for the National Research Council's recommendation for a National Forest Research Council.

Private and Voluntary Initiatives

Private initiatives that impact Maryland's forest landowners to encourage better management and conservation are numerous. The Maryland Forests Association's Master Logger Program, the Ruffed Grouse Society's Coverts Cooperator Workshop and the Association of Forest Industries' Habitat Conservation Planning efforts for the Delmarva Fox squirrel -- consistent with Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act -- illustrate the range, pride and seriousness with which these organizations have expanded their work. The State has encouraged and supported each of

these efforts.

Nationally, “the sustainable forest initiative” of the American Forest and Paper Association and the “certified forest practices program” established by the World Wildlife Fund and other organizations have developed principles, standards and guidelines for companies and public/private owners to encourage sustainable forest management practices. These practices protect water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, minimize visual impact of timber harvests and contribute to landscape diversity while stimulating consumer support for wood products derived from companies and lands adhering to these practices.

NOTE: Public questions over timber harvesting and forestry practices are at an all time high. In that light, members of the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) have made a commitment as part of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) to integrate public concerns and expectations into the way that they manage and harvest forest lands. The SFI program, at its core, a set of principles and implementation objectives that companies must follow in order to comply with the program. The public is invited to make comment or to ask questions about these principles and the companies that embrace them via the following Internet address:
mdsfi@ezy.net.

State government has a role in encouraging these practices and could provide technical assistance and administrative support to assess their use in Maryland. Private and voluntary initiatives are to be encouraged and, where possible, given priority to facilitate continued action to achieve positive stewardship benefits. Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources must be quick to praise, recognize, encourage and assist private sector efforts to develop the capacity to deliver technical assistance to private landowners and other stakeholders. Such efforts may have fiscal benefits. They will certainly create good will and additional opportunities for partnering to demonstrate high standards for sustainable forest management.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 19: Enhance primary and secondary education curriculum development by Maryland’s Department of Education -- in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources and other interested stakeholder groups -- that focuses on the values, benefits and management of trees and forests to Maryland’s ecology and economy.

RECOMMENDATION 20: Expand special interest publications and Internet resources by appropriate agencies within the Executive Branch of Maryland State Government in order to timely provide to appropriate stakeholders information on the following: (1) forest management; (2) habitat values; (3) owners’ rights and responsibilities; (4) market information; (5) conservation opportunities; and (6) such planning tools, programmatic and research information as may be available

RECOMMENDATION 21: Establish a new 4-year urban forestry degree program at the

University of Maryland no later than fiscal year 2002.

RECOMMENDATION 22: Request the Governor -- in his capacity as the Governor of Maryland and as the Chairman of the National Association of Governors -- to send a letter of support to the National Research Council favoring its recommendation for the creation of a National Forest Research Council vested with national coordinating responsibilities attendant to the nation's forest resource needs.

RECOMMENDATION 23: Expand Maryland's Forest Stewardship Program to include financial resources to provide formal recognition for Maryland's estimated 130,000 non-industrial private forest landowners. Such recognition should be afforded to those landowners whose stewardship contributions merit emulation throughout the State.

Chapter 6

The Forest Land/Urban Interface

The Forest Land/Urban Interface is the zone of demarcation between rural and urban land uses, having the amenities and problems associated with both. This is the arena in which urban sprawl is manifesting itself and altering the landscape in irreversible fashion.

Historically, the demand for raw materials (e.g., wood and land for development and agriculture) has conflicted with the protection and conservation of natural resources (e.g., water, recreation areas, forests and wildlife habitat). With more and more people inhabiting the land surrounding the Chesapeake Bay, these opposing needs will continue to compete as more and more forest land is fragmented and otherwise lost to development. To satisfy both environmental and economic needs, a balance must be struck between wise forest utilization and conservation. The challenge is to satisfy a diversity of human needs on a sustainable basis without sacrificing the ecological integrity of the forest. Conserving forests as growth and development take place allows us to benefit from our forests while still granting the option for future generations to use them tomorrow.

Challenges and Issues

- Development demonstrates its most dramatic impacts in the interface zone: conversion of land use, forest fragmentation, parcelization and impacts on water quality and flow. As forests are broken into smaller and smaller pieces, they lose their ecological integrity and their ability to produce the goods and services that Marylanders have come to expect and depend upon.
- Loss of the forest resources results in loss or significant degradation of habitat for living resources, both terrestrial and aquatic. Habitat function and value is impacted and critical forest structure and spatial patterns are severely disrupted.

The quality of a forest matters as much, and in some areas more, than the total forest area. Forest fragmentation occurring rapidly in the interface zone affects fish and wildlife populations and the biological health and diversity of the forest itself. If many small habitat losses occur over time, the cumulative effect will be similar to a few dramatic changes. Forest fragmentation in the interface zone disrupts wildlife travel corridors, increases the distribution of invasive exotic vegetation, exposes forest interiors (which is detrimental to interior-dwelling and nesting birds), and places people in direct conflict with the wildlife that live and feed in these forests. Habitat loss results in the reduction of many wildlife and the possible total elimination of some species.

- Builders are placing new home development into woodland settings often without the proper foresight relative to wildfire defensibility. Narrow roads limiting accessibility, flammable vegetation in close proximity to structures and inadequate water availability in the event of wildfire ultimately threaten both life and property. Special tactics and equipment are needed to address the unique situation presented to wildland firefighters in

the prevention and suppression of interface fires.

Maryland averages approximately 5,000 wildfires annually across the State. The average annual acreage of forest, marsh and grasslands burned due to wildfire is between 8,000 to 9,000 acres. The top three causes of wildfire in Maryland are: arson, debris burning and children. Traditionally, arson fires burn the greatest acreage and have the largest fire size averaging 10.5 acres per fire. Thus, arson ranks #1 in average fire size as compared to all other causes of wildfire in Maryland.

Collectively, the fire service community in Maryland is comprised of over 360 volunteer and 5 paid county-wide fire departments as well as various state and federal agencies. It is through a combined effort that the wildfires that do occur are for the most part small and causal minimal property damage. The Maryland DNR Forest Service responds to an average of 625 wildfires each year which burn an estimated 3,900 acres, assisting with suppression, mop-up, fire investigation and law enforcement as necessary. Additional services provided by the Forest Service include the following:

Pre-suppression
Preparedness
Readiness activities
Training
Investigation and law enforcement
Fire prevention and education
Prescribed fire planning and management
Equipping of local volunteer fire departments

Currently the Forest Service maintains an initial response force of over 75 personnel and 60 specialized fire suppression units, including 23 dozer-tractor plow units, 16 rollback transport units and 4 tractor trailer transport units and a bombardier. This heavy equipment is designed and equipped specifically for aiding in the containment and control of wildfires on forest lands and represents the only heavy equipment of this type in the State.

- The restoration and retention of Green Infrastructure in the forest land/urban interface zone is critical to promoting livable communities and fostering a sense of civic pride. Street trees, municipal parklands and riparian forest buffers serve as corridors connecting forest patches into a network which is part of a larger working landscape. Maryland's Green Infrastructure is an integral part of many of the solutions identified as priority efforts to improve the health and vitality of the Chesapeake Bay.

Recent studies indicate that conserving open space does not require an either/or choice between the environment and economics. Forest conservation and protection are a sound investment. Studies comparing the fiscal impact of development to conserve relatively unfragmented open space (such as forests) have found that conservation and protection of open space has more positive benefits on a community's economy than the fragmented sprawl-type development that often typifies the interface zone. The benefits come from lower costs of community services, increased property values resulting in higher tax revenues, greater recreational opportunities, more tourism dollars and free natural water quality and control.

To provide affordable housing and infrastructure (e.g., sewer, water and schools), land should be used appropriately with development concentrated where it is best served by existing public infrastructure while conserving and protecting as much forest as possible. Good planning and access to information are key elements in wise land use planning. Local jurisdictions need information and technical assistance to assist in retaining important natural, scenic and historic assets. Planning for Green Infrastructure to accommodate recreation, aesthetics, and areas for natural water quality can save money and enhance the character of growing communities.

State/local Partnership in Wildfire Suppression Efforts

Maryland’s DNR Forest Service is mandated by law to suppress wildfires in the State. The Task Force recognizes this is a major responsibility crucial to the health, safety and welfare of Maryland’s citizens and coveted natural resources. The Task Force also recognizes the ongoing fiscal constraints facing the State and the Department of Natural Resources with respect to the availability of scarce financial resources to replace and upgrade equipment. Innovative, cost effective solutions to pressing statewide problems beg consideration at all times.

There exists the Senator William H. Amoss Fire, Rescue, and Ambulance Fund, authorized in Article 38A, Sections 45A-45D and 46A of the Maryland Annotated Code. The Amoss Fund provides annual grants to local fire and rescue companies for the acquisition and rehabilitation of fire/rescue apparatus, the purchase of capital equipment and the rehabilitation of facilities to house equipment. These grants are formula driven and allocated annually to the counties, Baltimore City and qualifying municipalities. These grants are administered by the Superintendent of the Maryland Department of State Police, subject to funding availability via the annual budgetary process.

Fiscal Year 2000 Appropriation: \$10,000,000

In addition to formula grants, the State supplements the funding of volunteer companies through the volunteer company Emergency Assistance Trust Fund. As the name implies, the Fund provides assistance to companies whose ability to perform their responsibilities is impaired by natural disasters or other circumstances. These grants are administered by the State Firemen’s Association, under the supervision of the Board of Public Works, subject to funding availability via the annual budgetary process.

Fiscal Year 2000 Appropriation: \$791,224

In addition to annual State financial assistance, fire, rescue and ambulance services are financially supported by local governments, charitable organizations and the service providers themselves through fund raising efforts within the private sector.

Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources Forest Service receives an annual appropriation for fire fighting wildfires that approximates \$1 million.

Clearly, a strengthened working relationship between impacted stakeholders -- local governments, volunteer and paid professional fire fighting companies and DNR – in suppressing wildfires is needed.

RECOMMENDATION 24: Direct DNR to conduct a statewide prevention planning (risk, hazard, value) assessment that focuses on Maryland’s interface/intermix areas utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/ArcView Technology. The results will be used to develop an ignition management planning model for the DNR Forest Service.

EXPLANATION: The Ignition Management Planning model will then be implemented with the assistance of Maryland’s fire community, cooperating agencies, wildlife fire partners, Planning and Zoning Commissions, RC&D, Home Builders Association and the Insurance Industry. Such an exercise will provide the MD DNR Forest Service with a comprehensive assessment of Maryland’s Wildland-Urban Interface communities. It will identify and compile all existing local jurisdiction ordinances (planning and zoning) and fire codes applicable to Maryland, thus allowing the DNR Forest Service, working in conjunction with traditional and non-traditional partners, to raise the awareness of the public and the Legislature, and to educate homeowners relative to the wildlife potential within Maryland’s interface areas.

RECOMMENDATION 25: Direct DNR to initiate a Strategic Forest Land Assessment and update the assessment every 5 years for purposes of identifying those forest lands that are critical for their environmental as well as their economic benefits.

EXPLANATION: The identification of key or “strategic forest lands” based on resource significance and their subsequent evaluation based on potential vulnerability to development is critical to establishing forest conservation priorities. Such a “placed-based” approach allows for the geographical alignment of landscape (forest) conservation strategies with high resource values (ecological and economic) and high or moderate vulnerability, depending upon the goals and objectives of various forest conservation programs. The result is a more efficient application of the few tools and limited resources available to influence forest conservation.

The findings of the assessment would be shared with local governments with planning and zoning authority so that as local Master Plans are revised and updated, steps can be taken to conserve and protect critical existing forest lands, thus promoting the notion of “Saving the Best for Maryland.” This aids in responding to a major challenge facing Maryland as we enter the 21st Century -- **Increasing the profitability of resource-based industries.** The long-term profitability of the forest products industry is directly linked to a sustainable forest resource base.

RECOMMENDATION 26: Initiate a round table discussion in Spring 2001 among representatives from the Maryland Association of Counties, the Maryland Municipal League, the State Firemen’s Association, DNR’s Forest Service, Maryland’s Insurance Administration and others to determine how wildfire suppression efforts can best be strengthened and coordination enhanced among all providers of fire and rescue services within the State of Maryland. The findings/recommendations stemming from the round table discussion should be reported to the Maryland General Assembly and to attendees at the 2002 summer meetings of MACO and MML, respectively.

Chapter 7

Urban Forestry -- A Smart Future for Maryland's Community

Implementation of Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation is well underway. Citizens throughout the State want to embrace its goals. A key consideration in many communities is a strong, comprehensive urban forestry program.

Urban trees offer a wide array of benefits to the urban and suburban environments and the quality of life of those citizens who live in these areas. By addressing the health, type, arrangement and care of trees in a city, public officials, urban foresters and residents can directly affect the cities' physical, biological and socio-economic attributes. Through sensitive planning, design and management, trees can mitigate many of the detrimental impacts of urban development by moderating climate, re-directing structural energy utilization, improving air and water quality, reducing run off and noise, preserving wildlife habitat and improving real estate values. These significant and sustainable benefits yield important benefits for the implementation of Smart Growth. Urban landscape design and infrastructure development plans must take into consideration these interactions to maximize the benefit of urban green infrastructure.

Local Laws and Ordinances

Trees are part of the very fabric that attracts many residents to a community. To moderate the impact of growth and stop the indiscriminate destruction of local woodland, many jurisdictions have adopted tree preservation ordinances. These distinctive policies are uniquely fashioned to address local objectives and seek to provide the development community with a framework for preserving and restoring as many trees as possible on a site, with particular emphasis on larger and older specimens. These ordinances help preserve a city's beauty, while providing an equitable means of adjusting to growth and the inevitability of urban change.

Green in Urban Planning

The same considerations that have led to development of tree ordinances have also encouraged the development of more holistic and inclusive processes which use ecosystems such as watersheds and other ecological boundaries as the basis for planning, data collection, monitoring and implementation of policies such as Smart Growth.

What is an Urban Forest?

For descriptive purposes, the elements of an urban forest can include areas like parks, playgrounds and squares or links like street corridors, trails and streams. Conservation areas like wetlands, slopes, ponds and stream water runoff areas are all components of an urban forest.

Streets constitute one of the most visible elements of the public landscape. Their significant impact on public perception and visual quality of a community's residential neighborhood and commercial area is strongly affected by the presence of healthy trees.

Some writers have noted that tree density may be a better indicator of a community's health and livability than its population density. This view underscores the need for a strong vision that integrates the natural with the built-up environment. A continuous network of urban trees from yards, streets, streams and parks to regional green links, forests and agricultural lands must be the underpinning of both urban and Smart Growth planning.

Tree Issues

There are a variety of problems to be addressed with the placement, planting, health and survival of urban trees. Some of these problems -- pests, disease, storms and drought -- do not differ in character with forest settings in non-urban areas. Impacts attendant to utilities, sidewalks, sewers, pollutants and soils may be unique to a particular area.

Communities need the encouragement of strong, well-articulated programs that encourage relationships among citizens, various stakeholders and frequent communication with urban foresters, utilities and State forestry personnel. This infusion of technical and educational information can lead to growing local support, improvements and the promise of growing success in the future.

Urban Forestry

As we enter the new millennium, it is clear that the past century of unparalleled population growth and urbanization are having substantive and, frequently, very detrimental impact on natural systems and processes. Forests are threatened and in many areas cannot provide the ecological benefits needed for purifying water and air, stabilizing soil and sustaining habitat.

In looking to the future, it's apparent that a new focus must emerge in urban forestry. New professionals in this area are needed who are supported by the citizenry and public officials. The years ahead will provide critical challenges to curb the loss of urban wildlife habitat, ensure public access to nature and create/maintain functional green infrastructure.

Ironically, it is where the landscape and natural systems have been substantially altered that management is most needed. This is a critical niche for urban forestry and local natural resource professionals who understand ecological issues and are trained to deal with the need for public participation and development issues. Urban forestry can significantly contribute to the long-term sustainability of Maryland's communities and their Smart Growth plans.

RECOMMENDATION 27: Request the Governor to direct the Department of Transportation to re-direct spending -- out of existing federal/State highway funds -- to local governments for purposes of expansion/maintenance of urban street tree cover adjacent to public rights of way.

RECOMMENDATION 28: Direct DNR Forest Service to develop at least two pilot projects with special emphasis on traditionally under served neighborhoods and older, established communities to use data and recommendations developed by the Strategic Forest

Initiative as a guide for local governments in their planning, management, linkage and preservation decisions regarding urban forest resources.

RECOMMENDATION 29: Direct DNR to create regional forest consortia in several areas of Maryland to develop cost of community services studies which specifically include the loss of forest resources and the fiscal impact of residential development and its significance for creation of forest resource fragmentation and effect on watersheds.

RECOMMENDATION 30: Encourage the Forest Conservancy District Boards to provide advice and input into the development of county-based, green infrastructure plans.

RECOMMENDATION 31: Establish and provide funding to allow DNR to institute an Urban Forest Monitoring Program to assess the extent and conditions of the State’s urban forests via periodic surveys.

RECOMMENDATION 32: Establish a statewide goal to increase tree cover in metropolitan and urban areas to 40% of total land area within a targeted 10-year period and assist local governments in their efforts to expand urban tree canopy cover within their respective jurisdictions through a neighborhood matching grant program.

Chapter 8

Managing for the Future

The ability of privately owned forests to provide social, economic and environmental benefits rests on the responsible exercise of stewardship and respect of the rights associated with private ownership. Society expects landowners to use and manage their property consistent with accepted sustainable practices. Without such mutual respect and agreement, landowners and public policy makers will have difficulty in determining appropriate public investment and assistance.

Moreover, concern over how to best address the need to improve forestry management -- in response to the ecological contributions rendered by forests and the public's demand for greater environmental sensitivity and awareness -- has led to the enactment of numerous federal and State laws governing land use practices. Couple this realization with increased development pressure attendant to an expanding population, it is little wonder that landowners are often swayed by developers' high dollar offers to purchase their forest lands.

The Task Force strongly believes greater emphasis and significant State support must be provided over the next 5 years to encourage retention of privately owned forest lands. The Task Force also strongly believes the recommendations made in this Report provide a foundation for addressing responsible stewardship goals by both private forest landowners and public policy leaders.

Responsible Stewardship

Decisions by Maryland's private, non-industrial landowners will have the largest effect on the future of Maryland's forests. Will they sell their land or will they retain and better manage their land for environmental, ecological and/or economic purposes? **THIS IS THE ULTIMATE DILEMMA FACING FOREST LANDOWNERS DURING THE 21ST CENTURY.** Future actions by federal, State and local governments and escalating development pressure attendant to an expanding population will influence their decisions.

Sustainable forest practices on private land can be achieved in a number of ways. The most important of these is through responsible actions by informed owners and responsible implementation of public policies directed toward forest lands in private hands. These responsibilities are investments in Maryland's ecological future. Chapter 4 speaks to the importance of authorizing financial incentives to help encourage retention of privately owned forest lands and identifies specific recommendations.

Maryland's growth pressures serve to raise public expectations of private forest landowners. People want open space land. As the State acts to ensure the conservation and sustainability of our natural heritage in the context of broad private ownership, a fundamental issue is whether private owners have sufficient knowledge, skills, tools and resources to provide a basis for responsible stewardship into the 21st Century. And judging by the fact that only an estimated 10% of the 130,000 private forest landowners have adopted forest conservation management plans to date, one could arguably assume the answer is negative.

Thus a comprehensive strategy of assistance in developing forest resource protection and management should be a priority at the state and local government levels. This Report lays the

foundation for this strategy.

State Leading by Example

Stewardship Plans

Maryland's acquisition of its largest land purchase in State history -- 58,000 acres of land on the Eastern Shore per the September 10, 1999 agreement -- should be a model for forest conservation management. Indeed, the letter signed by Maryland's DNR Secretary Dr. Sarah J. Taylor-Rogers to the Association of Forest Industries, Inc. on September 3, 1999 affirms the State's commitment to develop this plan (attached). The letter sent to Governor Glendening by Members of Legislative District 33 shortly thereafter, further underscores a growing concern to see Maryland's Department of Natural Resources commit to forest conservation management plans on forest lands held in the public domain (attached). Supplement these initiatives with the recommendations advanced in September 1999 by the Western Maryland Agricultural and Natural Resources Task Force, and a clear case has been made -- DNR's Forest Service must take a stronger lead in forestry management on publicly owned lands with an eyes towards securing biological, ecological, environmental and economic balance.

Stronger Partnership between the Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Maryland's Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources are vested with the statutory responsibility to conserve natural resources and regulate lands held by the public and private individuals, albeit with different statutory missions. The degree of formal and ongoing interaction between these two departments -- in areas of mutual interest for the State's coveted natural resources, especially with respect to retention and management -- could be significantly strengthened.

NOTE: Legislative support for the nexus between forestry and agriculture was evidenced with the enactment of legislation at the 1998 Session of the Maryland General Assembly which afforded statutory protection for agricultural and forestry activities against nuisance suits filed by aggrieved persons concerning the nature of their respective operations (Senate Bill 404).

On January 19, 1999 the Task Force issued its interim report, consistent with Governor Glendening's directive via Executive Order 01.01.1998.09. An excerpt from the Interim Report reads as follows:

“Retention of forest lands, as with agricultural lands, often depends upon other incentives to overcome the pressures for development. Initial reviews make it clear that the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) could be utilized more fully in this regard. Section 2-501 of the Agriculture Article, Maryland Annotated Code states that:

‘It is the intent of the Maryland General Assembly to preserve agricultural *land and woodland* in order to: provide sources of agricultural products within the State for the citizens of the State; control the urban expansion which is consuming the agricultural *land and woodland* of the State; curb the spread of urban blight and deterioration; and protect agricultural *land and woodland* as open-space land. (italics added)’

Clearly, legislative intent affords comparable status to the preservation of farmland and

woodland. The Task Force respectfully requests the Governor to (1) appoint a member of the forest community to the MALPF Board -- such an appointment would reassure forest owners that they are equal participants under the MALPF program; and (2) empower Maryland's Forestry Boards with the authority to comment on the criteria for approving individual applications under the Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation."

The Task Force re-affirms its Interim position.

IN CLOSING, the Task Force recognizes that stewardship is a two way street. Government must do its part by ensuring a balance exists -- via statutory and regulatory land use policies -- between concern for the environment and concern for the forest landowners economic well-being from a stewardship perspective. Moreover the State should develop forest stewardship plans on public land holdings where the land is deemed suitable for such planning, e.g. manageable and economically viable. Forest landowners must do their part by adhering to time-honored stewardship principles.

RECOMMENDATION 33: Direct DNR to enhance the sustainable management of the State's publicly-owned forests and parks for wildlife, water, aesthetics, biodiversity, wood production and passive recreation by more thoroughly integrating the expertise that exists within the Public Lands and Forest Service units to achieve a greater level of interagency decision-making and collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION 34: Develop Memorandums of Understanding between Maryland's Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources in areas of mutual responsibility pertinent to natural resource land management and regulation. With the multitude of land preservation programs developed and coordinated by these agencies -- Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, Rural Legacy Program, Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP), etc. -- a strengthened partnership will help ensure the continued conservation of Maryland's coveted natural resources into the 21st Century.

RECOMMENDATION 35: Ensure that an appointed representative from Maryland's forest community always serves on the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and that Maryland's forestry conservancy district boards play a pivotal role in helping to approve individual applications under the Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. These actions are consistent with and responsive to the intent of the law creating the Foundation.

Chapter 9

Managing for Results

On June 19, 1997 Governor Glendening announced a bold initiative to “move Maryland forward into the next century as one of the premiere states utilizing results-based management” in an effort to strengthen accountability to customers, stakeholders, policy makers and all the citizens of Maryland. The announcement was embodied in a document entitled ***Managing for Results***, a guidebook designed to assist State agencies to meet the challenge for excellence in government by guiding agencies through a clearly articulated planning process aimed at efficient, effective, and quality services and products. This planning process requires agencies to clearly articulate their visions, missions, goals and objectives; and ultimately to assess the success of programs through the use of performance measures.

Governor Glendening directed the performance measurement process to be phased in over a three year period beginning with fiscal year 1998, culminating with a full reporting of performance measurement data by agency programs during the third year and thereafter.

The Maryland Forestry Task Force has added this special section solely for the purpose of suggesting how its key recommendations may be addressed consistent with and responsive to the Governor’s 1997 ***Managing for Results*** directive. *Noteworthy is the fact the Task Force modeled its performance measuring efforts after the Maryland Stream Releaf Implementation Plan issued on June 30, 1998.* Presented below are goals and their attendant objectives, including suggested ways of measuring performance and tracking results through the use of quantifiable indices.

GOALS are reflected in upper case print

Objectives accompany each goal and are shown in bold print

Performance Measurements are shown two ways: (1) graphically during a 5-year period (fiscal years 2002 through fiscal year 2006, unless shown otherwise to mean calendar years) -- *not all years reflect measures because more information and/or experience based on time and actions are needed to effect realistic projections*; and (2) in narrative form only.

GOAL 1

DOCUMENT MARYLAND’S STATEWIDE FOREST RESOURCE SYSTEM

Objective 1A

Conduct a statewide inventory assessment of Maryland’s forested lands every 5 years beginning with fiscal year 2002.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Funds appropriated	\$60,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Inventory:					
<i>Initiated</i>	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Completed</i>		Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Results Reported*	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	... N/A

**Envisioned is a comprehensive reporting process -- that may prove useful to be ongoing -- involving impacted stakeholder groups to be conducted by Maryland’s Department of Natural Resources upon completion of the assessment.*

Objective 1B

Initiate a *Strategic Forest Land Assessment* to identify those forest lands that are critical for their environmental as well as their economic benefits during fiscal year 2002 and update on an annual basis.

Performance Measurement: (1) identify appropriate DNR staff to undertake the assessment; (2) appoint an advisory stakeholder group to assist DNR with the assessment; (3) establish tasks and set realistic time tables to accomplish such tasks; (4) develop responsive strategies and funding mechanisms for consideration by State/local lawmakers and public managers; and (5) report to the Governor and the General Assembly on progress realized through pursuit of strategies formulated with policy makers and stakeholder groups. Envisioned is a one-time fiscal year 2002 appropriation of \$125,000.

GOAL 2

COORDINATE MARYLAND’S LAND CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Objective 2A

Beginning with fiscal year 2002, develop a *Targeted Priority Resource Initiative* that ensures coordination between Maryland’s principal land conservation programs -- Program Open Space, Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation and Rural Legacy Program -- to conserve those lands deemed most threatened by development pressure and those lands important to the long-term health of the Chesapeake Bay consistent with their respective statutory missions.

Performance Measurement: (1) appointment of an Inter-Agency Workgroup by the Governor to develop the proposal; (2) identify environmental and economic benefits attendant to the proposal; (3) secure feedback about proposal from appropriate stakeholder groups/organizations; (4) seek legislative support for the proposal; (5) implement the proposal and monitor annual compliance for all succeeding years; and (6) report to the Governor and the General Assembly about the results of the Initiative.

GOAL 3

MANAGE MARYLAND’S PUBLICLY-OWNED FOREST LANDS

Objective 3A

By fiscal year 2010, develop, update and/or modify forest stewardship plans on all DNR-managed lands -- consistent with DNR’s existing policy of affording stakeholder input in the development of these plans -- that speak to fish and wildlife habitat improvement, natural heritage, recreation and aesthetic, soil and water conservation and wood products.

Action	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Growth in percent of State-owned land under plan*	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Total percent of State-owned land under plan					100%

*Forest conservation management plans address fish and wildlife habitat improvement, natural heritage, recreation, soil and water conservation and timber production.

GOAL 4

CONSERVE MARYLAND’S PRIVATELY OWNED FOREST LANDS THROUGH THE PROVISION OF FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Objective 4A

Enact legislation at the 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly that provides a one-time only State income tax credit equal to 100% of the costs associated with the development of a forest stewardship plan for interested forest landowners.

Action	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Legislation Introduced*	Yes				
Legislation Enacted	Yes				
Governor Signs into Law	Yes				
Number of participating landowners	100	150-300	300-500	500-750	750-1,000

**Legislation introduced during the calendar year 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly with an effective date of fiscal year 2002 (July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002). Out-years reflect calendar years, not fiscal years.*

Objective 4B

Enact legislation authorizing local governments to approve property tax credits to forest lands enrolled in a forest mgt. plan at the 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly.

Action	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Legislation Introduced*	Yes				
Legislation Enacted	Yes				
Governor Signs into Law	Yes				

**Legislation introduced during the calendar year 2000 Session of the Maryland General Assembly with an effective date of fiscal year 2001 (July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002). Out-years reflect calendar years, not fiscal years.*

Objective 4C**Local governments approve property tax credits, by law, beginning in fiscal year 2002.**

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Type of Landowner Outreach Efforts:					
<i>Local Media</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>County Forestry Board</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Public Announcements</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Public Hearings on Local Law	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2
Number of Counties Adopting Ordinance	N/A	5	5	5	7

Objective 4D**Eligible forest landowner participation reaches 75% within 10 years, per those counties having approved property tax credits for landowner adoption of forest management plans.**

County	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Growth in percent of private forest	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
Total percent of private forest land	15%	30%	45%	65%	75%

Objective 4E**Enact legislation at the 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly that provides a sales tax exemption for all equipment and pollution control devices directly used in the primary and secondary wood manufacturing process exclusively within jurisdictions defined by statute as *One Maryland counties*.**

Action	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Legislation Introduced*	Yes				
Legislation Enacted	Yes				
Governor Signs into Law	Yes				
Number of participating	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10

**Legislation introduced during the calendar year 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly with an effective date of fiscal year 2002 (July 1, 2001 through June 20, 2002). Out-years reflect calendar years, not fiscal years.*

Objective 4F

Provide annual financial and technical assistance to key stakeholder groups for purposes of assisting forest landowners with their land use decisions.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Forestry Boards via (<i>\$ in thousands</i>):					
<i>Grants to Individual Boards*</i>	\$50	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$125
<i>Grants to Professional Forest Consultants</i>	\$125	\$125	\$150	\$150	\$150
MD Coop. Extension** -- Landowner Outreach Programs (<i>\$ in thousands</i>):	\$50	\$50	\$75	\$75	\$100

**At \$50,000 each forestry board receives \$2,000 in State matching funds; at \$75,000 each board receives \$3,000; at \$100,000 each board receives \$4,000; and at \$125,000 each board receives \$5,000.*

*** Denotes Maryland Cooperative Extension Service (University of Maryland)*

Objective 4G

Increase the capacity of DNR Forest, Wildlife and Heritage to provide technical assistance that enables forest landowners to develop forest conservation management plans.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Funding Authorization*	\$460,000	\$506,000	\$556,600	\$612,260	\$673,490
Number of additional DNR foresters	6	Same	Same	Same	Same

**Envisioned is the funding authorization increasing by 10% each year to reflect inflationary allowance and outreach priority -- monies to be used to employ full-time and/or contractual employees as deemed appropriate -- \$330,000 of the \$460,000 reflect personnel costs and \$130,000 of the \$460,000 reflect equipment costs.*

GOAL 5**PROTECT THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF MARYLAND'S FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY****Objective 5A**

Create a Renewable Natural Resource Investment Priority through statutory and budgetary action for the period spanning fiscal year 2002 through fiscal year 2006.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Legislation Introduced	Yes				
Legislation Enacted	Yes				
Governor Signs into Law	Yes				
Budget Appropriation (<i>mil</i>)	\$2.5 - \$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0
Economic Impact:*					
<i># of Companies Assisted</i>	5-10	10-20	10-20	10-20	10-20
<i># of Jobs Retained</i>					
<i># of Jobs Attracted</i>					
<i>State/Local Taxes Paid</i>					
<i>Employee Income</i>					
<i>Value Added \$</i>					

*NOTE: Economic impact projections influenced by annual budgeted appropriations which cannot be realistically ascertained at this time.

Objective 5B

Create a Forest Products Utilization and Marketing Program within the Department of Natural Resources during fiscal year 2002.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Program created via:					
<i>Executive Approval</i>	Yes				
<i>Legislative Approval</i>	Yes				
Funds appropriated*	\$100,000	\$150,000	\$165,000	\$181,500	\$200,000

*Envisioned is a funding authorization increase in fiscal year 2003 to fully implement the Program with out-year authorizations adjusted by 10% for inflation and outreach efforts.

Objective 5C

Enact legislation at the 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly that provides a 15% axle weight variance for trucks used in hauling timber from the forests to the sawmills during the June-September period only.

Action	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Legislation Introduced*	Yes				
Legislation Enacted	Yes				
Governor Signs into Law	Yes				

**Legislation introduced during the calendar year 2001 Session of the Maryland General Assembly with an effective date of fiscal year 2002 (July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002). Out-years reflect calendar years, not fiscal years.*

Objective 5D

Annually update *A Guide to Maryland's Regulation of Forest Products Industry* beginning with fiscal year 2002.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Funds appropriated	\$30,000	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Guide Updated	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
# of Copies Distributed*	50	75-100	75-100	75-100	75-100
Percent of Costs Recouped**	50% to 75%	50% to 75%	50% to 75%	50% to 75%	50% to 75%

**Envisioned is the dissemination of the Guide to forest products operators statewide*

***Envisioned is the sale of the **Guide** to the private sector with annual cost recovery projected in the 50% to 75% range.*

****Funding decreases in fiscal year 2003 is envisioned because the Guide should not require extensive revision; however, in fiscal year 2004, the Guide should be updated and available via the Internet consistent with Objective 6C which will require an increase in related funding.*

GOAL 6

EDUCATE MARYLANDERS ABOUT THE FOREST SYSTEM

Objective 6A

Beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, ensure primary/secondary educational curricula within Maryland's public school system focuses on the multitude of environmental, ecological and economic benefits attendant to a well-managed forest system.

Performance Measurement: (1) DNR personnel meet with appropriate personnel at Maryland's Department of Education to initiate the process; (2) survey other states with similar programs; (3) identify and resolve impediments to implementation; (4) conduct informational workshops with local boards of education, PTA groups, teachers and other interested stakeholders; (5) promote the program through appropriate media; (6) gauge feedback on program from participating students; and (7) initiate changes to curricula based on student survey findings/recommendations. Envisioned is a fiscal year 2002 appropriation of \$300,000 -- and a like amount during the succeeding four-year period -- that accomplishes this objective .

Objective 6B

Establish a 4-year urban forestry degree at the University of Maryland no later than fiscal year 2002.

Action	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Program Initiated		Yes			
Funding Approved		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Student Enrollment*	25-50	>10%	>10%	>10%	>10%

**Envisioned is a successful program that realizes a 10% enrollment increase each year during its first five years of existence.*

Objective 6C

Expand special interest publications and Internet resources -- on an ongoing basis -- by appropriate agencies within the Executive Branch of Maryland State Government to provide timely responses to landowners' inquiries about land use planning and decision-making.

Performance Measurement: (1) through Maryland's Information Technology Council, initiate the system wide assessment during fiscal year 2002; (2) complete the assessment by the close of fiscal year 2003; (3) improve system delivery through the elimination of agency efforts and/or documents deemed duplicative and counterproductive; (4) timely share forest products market data derived from the Marketing and Utilization Program within DNR consistent with Objective 5B; (5) conduct periodic user surveys to ascertain the quality of existing and proposed service delivery systems; and (6) pursue State/local administrative, statutory, budgetary and/or regulatory strategies designed to improve land use decision-making by landowners and other stakeholder groups.

GOAL 7

ADVANCE COMPETITIVE EDGE STRATEGIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Objective 7A

Strengthen the strategic alliance between forestry and agriculture -- two of Maryland's principal resource-based industries -- within both the public and private sector.

Performance Measurement: (1) ensure the ongoing appointment of a forestry representative to the 11-Member Board of Trustees, Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF); (2) empower the State's Forestry Boards to work with the State's agricultural boards in reviewing easement purchases under MALPF; (3) achieve a successful **Targeted Priority Resource Initiative** as noted in Objective 2A; (4) through user feedback surveys, realize improved public/private sector relations because of innovative natural resource land management decisions advanced via **Memorandums of Understanding** noted in **Recommendation 34** of the Report; and (5) witness joint management strategies -- administrative, statutory, budgetary and/or regulatory oriented -- advanced on an ongoing basis by relevant stakeholder groups including, but not limited to, the Association of Forest Industries, Inc., Maryland Farm Bureau, Maryland Forests Association, Tree Farm Committee, etc.

Objective 7B

Establish an Urban Forest Monitoring Program within Maryland's DNR that (1) provides an ongoing assessment of the conditions of the State's urban forests; and (2) helps facilitate the realization of a statewide goal to increase tree cover in metropolitan and urban areas to 40% of total land area within a targeted 10-year period.

Performance Measurement: (1) secure an appropriation of \$200,000 in fiscal year 2002 that provides \$100,000 to the two-fold effort noted in Objective 7C, respectively; (2) appoint personnel within DNR to coordinate the requirements of Objective 7C; (3) conduct requisite stakeholder outreach meetings; and (4) report outreach efforts to appropriate stakeholder groups and public officials.

Objective 7C

Pool financial and personnel resources at the State/local level to improve the timely suppression of wildfire fighting efforts.

Performance Measurement: (1) appoint a representative workgroup to identify and assess ways to better pool limited financial and personnel resources to strengthen wildfire suppression efforts on a statewide basis; (2) advance responsive strategies stemming from the efforts of the workgroup; (3) meet with appropriate State/local policy makers and officials for purpose of implementing such strategies; and (4) annually report on the successes and/or failures associated with this undertaking



October 20, 1999

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Gary G. Allen, Chair
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Dear Gary:

Thank you for meeting with me regarding the progress of Maryland's Forestry Task Force. I am encouraged by your efforts and the Task Force's desire to address the multitude of issues facing Maryland's forestry industry.

One area that we discussed, forest conservation management plans, was of particular interest to me. I agree that the State has an opportunity to make a real impact for Smart Growth in this area. I have asked my Chief Legislative Officer, Joseph Bryce, to look into enabling legislation for local governments to grant property tax breaks for landowners who choose to enroll in these plans. Mr. Bryce will keep me informed of any developments in this area.

In recognition of the important role of Maryland's Forestry Task Force to the survival of Maryland's forestry industry, I agree with your recommendation to extend the life of the Task Force. Thus, I have requested that my staff take the necessary steps to accomplish this. The life of the task force and the membership of those serving, will be extended by one year to allow you to continue to focus on ensuring the viability of this industry. Please continue to work closely with the Departments of Natural Resources and Business and Economic Development as you move forward.

Regrettably, I must decline your request for the Task Force to formally present its finding to me before the end of the year. I am recommending that the findings and recommendations be presented to Sarah Taylor Rogers, Secretary, Department of Natural Resources. Please contact her office directly to arrange this presentation. Should you have any additional questions, you may contact my Deputy Chief of Staff, Donna L. Jacobs, at (410) 974-3560.

Sincerely,

Parris N. Glendening
Governor

cc: Donna L. Jacobs
Joseph Bryce
Sarah Taylor Rogers
David Iannuzzi

Biographies

Gary G. Allen: Chairman Allen is currently the Executive Director of the Center of Chesapeake Communities, (an Environmental organization which provides service to local Governments in the Bay Watershed) and the former Mayor of Bowie, Maryland.

Ms. Francis C. Cullen: Serves as Chairman of the Wicomico County Forest Conservation District Board she is a forest landowner.

Mr. Jeff A Messenger: President of Wood Products, Inc., Oakland, Maryland

Mr. William R. Miles: Serves as the Executive Director of the Association of Forest Industries, Inc. which represents the interests of Maryland's Forest Landowners and the Forest Products Industry

Ernest L. Murphy, Ph.D.: Economist, assisted in the evaluation of the economic impact of forest industries and the provision of economic incentives to encourage forest stewardship.

Jodi R. O'Day, Esquire: Chief Counsel for the Conservation Fund

Ms. Sylvia D. Wintworth: Has served 15 years as Fish Biologist for the District of Columbia and is currently responsible for educating the public on aquatic resources.



Parris N. Glendening
Governor

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
Lt. Governor

Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Tawes State Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
September 3, 1999

Sarah J. Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D.
Secretary

Stanley K. Arthur
Deputy Secretary

William R. Miles
Executive Director
Association of Forest Industries, Inc.
P.O. Box 501
Huntingtown, MD 20639

[Signature]
Dear Mr. Miles:

I am in receipt of your letter of August 11, 1999, regarding the Forest Management Plan for the Eastern Shore Land Acquisition. As always, I appreciate the interest of the Association of Forest Industries and look forward to working with AFI, Inc., as we develop a process toward comprehensive forest management of the Chesapeake land.

I want to assure you that the Department does plan to develop a comprehensive forest management plan on the land we will initially acquire through the transaction. We want to be certain that the resulting forest conservation management plan reflects stewardship goals that address all forest resources to include wildlife, timber production, water, aesthetics, biodiversity as well as environmental and passive recreation.

The Department will be involving many affected and interested stakeholders in the development of this forest management plan, and certainly appreciates the extension of assistance from the industry.

Sincerely,

Sarah J. Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D.

SJTR:JEM:gk

cc: Carolyn Watson, Assistant Secretary for Resources Management Services
Rich Dolesh, Director of Forest, Wildlife & Heritage Service
Jim Mallow, State Forester

3RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

ROBERT C. BALDWIN
ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

DAVID G. BOSCHERT
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

JANET GREENHIP
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE



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E-MAIL: janet_greenhip@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

September 22, 1999

The Honorable Parris N. Glendening
Governor, State of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Forest Conservation Management Plan for Declared Surplus Lands at Crownsville State Hospital

Dear Governor Glendening:

Your decision to prohibit the residential development of the declared surplus lands at Crownsville State Hospital has been well received in District 33. Please accept our heartfelt appreciation for your leadership and decisive intervention on that matter.

There are, however, two additional issues deserving of your involvement and leadership: (1) the future status of Crownsville State Hospital; and (2) the appropriate use of the 546 acres declared surplus by the State Clearinghouse Process. We respectfully request your consideration of our ideas summarized herein.

In July 1999, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene issued its final Report in response to a 1998 Joint Chairman's Report (JCR) directive entitled, "The Statewide Needs Assessment for Mental Health Services and Mental Hygiene Administration's Five Year Plan for Downsizing and Consolidating of State Psychiatric Hospitals." A key finding of the report was that:

These steps in themselves [additional services that fill service gaps] will effect reductions that will be equal to, if not greater than, the overall effect of closing one of the three largest State Psychiatric Hospitals.

In short, the Report does not recommend the closure of any State psychiatric hospitals at this time. In view of the significant projected general population growth in the region served by Crownsville State Hospital through the year 2010, we strongly support the Report's recommendation as it relates to Crownsville. As noted in the Report, it is estimated that 20% of the general population nationwide will need some type of mental health services in any given year. For these reasons, we respectfully request that you will join us in support of the continued operation of Crownsville State Hospital.

The Report also contains two recommendations that are noteworthy to our second idea concerning the preferred use of the 546 surplus acres: (1) underwrite a \$57 million community-based mental health initiative with \$16.8 million in offsetting revenues derived from facility savings; and (2) reduce the acreage holdings at the State's three psychiatric hospitals. With this in mind, we also respectfully request that you transfer management responsibility of the 546 acres to Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (Forest Service) conditioned on the prompt development by them of a forest conservation management plan for the property. We suggest that this forest conservation management plan should be developed in partnership with the environmental community and the forest products industry.

The Honorable Parris N. Glendening
September 22, 1999
Page 2


We feel the idea of such a plan for the 546 acres is consistent with Maryland's nationally acclaimed Smart Growth principles and the State's intention to develop such a plan for the 58,000 acres recently acquired on the Eastern Shore. Such a plan would ensure the adoption of appropriate forestry and conservation procedures so that future generations will be able to enjoy the forests and natural resources that we now seek to protect and enhance.

We stand prepared to assist you in any way as you make these important decisions.

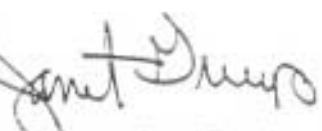
Sincerely,



Delegate Robert C. Baldwin



Delegate David G. Boschert



Delegate Janet Greenip



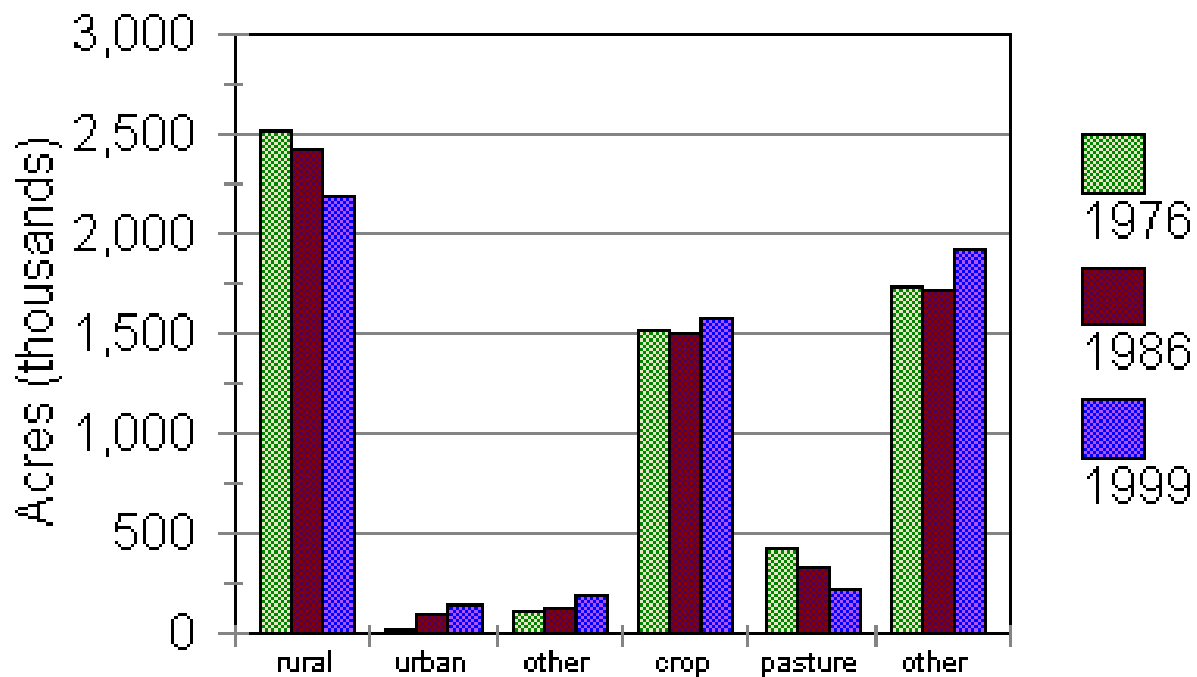
Senator Robert R. Neall

cc: Georges C. Benjamin, M.D.
Secretary
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Sara J. Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D.
Secretary
Department of Natural Resources

ljm

Change in the Distribution of Land Class by Inventory Year

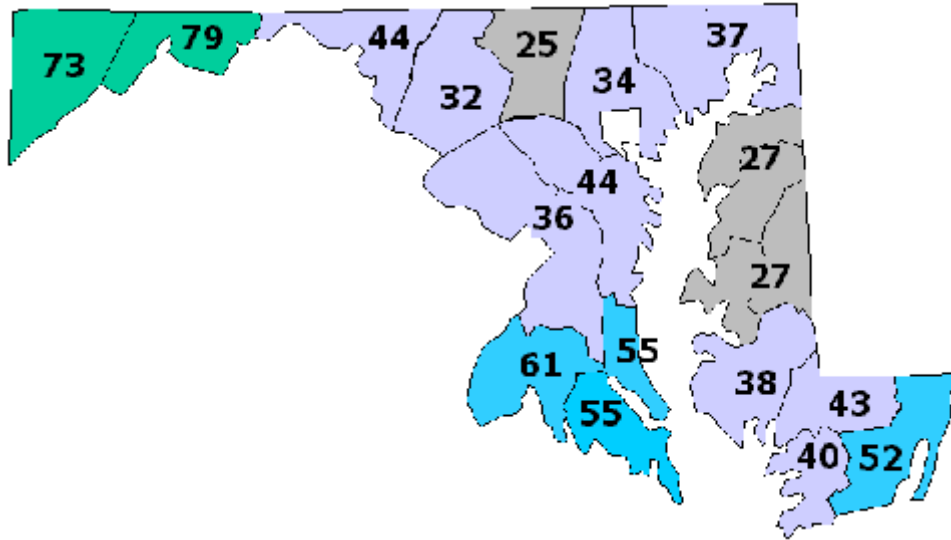


	1976	1986	1999
Rural Forest	2,522.7	2,421.7	2,196.5
Urban Forest	21.0	100.5	136.9
Other Forest	109.5	123.2	193.9
Crop Land	1,513.7	1,502.4	1,575.1
Improved Pasture	423.5	334.1	225.6
Other Non-forest	1,739.8	1,722.2	1,927.9

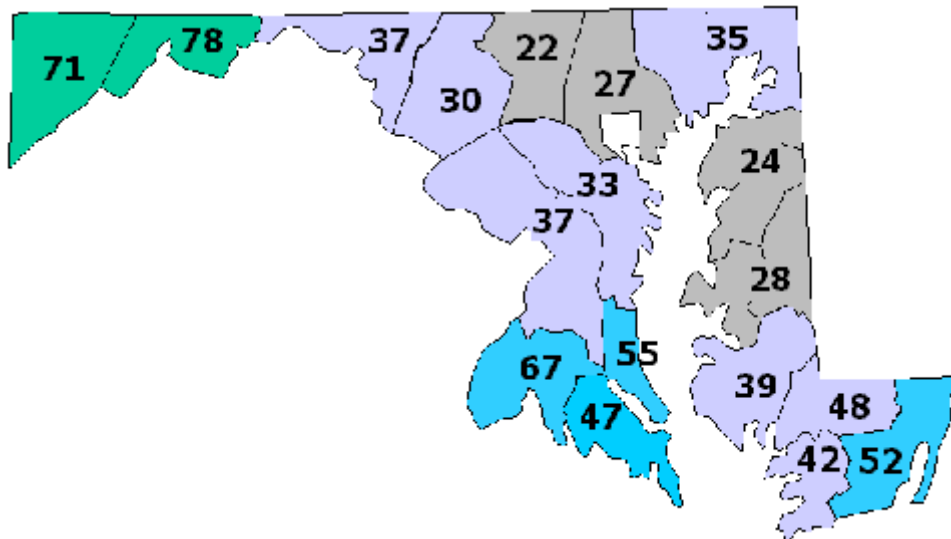
- rural forests make up the greatest land use.
- rural forests have continually decreased in area.
- urban forests and other forest classifications are increasing, but still make up a small percentage of forest land.
- non-forested areas have increased since the 1976 inventory.

Source: USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis, Newtown Square, PA.
Forest inventories for 1976, 1986, and 1999.

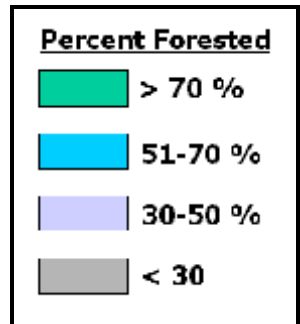
Percent Forest Land by County 1986 and 1999



Percent Forest Land - 1986



Percent Forest Land - 1999



Standard Error for forested acres of individual counties range from 2.3 to 14.3 percent.

Source: USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis, Newtown Square, PA.
Forest inventories for 1986, and 1999.